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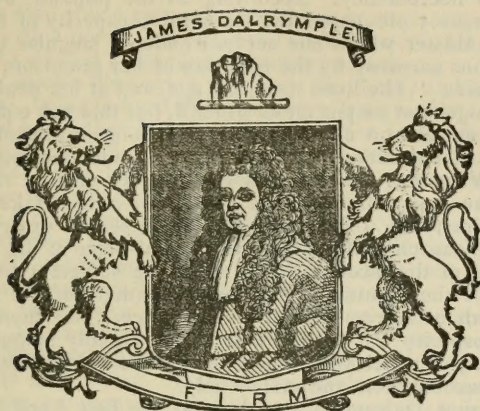
THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR
AND KEEPSAKE STORIES AND
CHRONICLE OF CANONGATE

By SIR WALTER SCOTT



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INTRODUCTION—1830

THE Author, on a former occasion, declined giving the real source from which he drew the tragic subject of this history,* because, though occurring at a distant period, it might possibly be unpleasing to the feelings of the descendants of the parties. But as he finds an account of the circumstances given in the Notes to Law's Memorials,† by his ingenious friend Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq., and also indicated in his reprint of the Rev. Mr. Symson's Poems, appended to the Description of Galloway,‡ as the original of the Bride of Lammermoor, the Author feels himself now at liberty to tell the tale as he had it from connections of his own, who lived very near the period, and were closely related to the family of the Bride.

It is well known that the family of Dalrymple, which has produced within the space of two centuries as many men of talent, civil and military, and of literary, political, and professional eminence, as any house in Scotland, first rose into distinction in the person of James Dalrymple, one of the most eminent lawyers that ever lived, though the labors of his powerful mind were unhappily exercised on a subject so limited as Scottish Jurisprudence, on which he has composed an admirable work.

He married Margaret, daughter to Ross of Balniel, with whom he obtained a considerable estate. She was an able, politic and high-minded woman, so successful in what she undertook, that the vulgar, no way partial to her husband or her family, imputed her

* Note A. The Family of Stair.

† Law's Memorials, 4to, 1818, p. 226.

‡ See note to p. 7.

success to necromancy. According to the popular belief, this Dame Margaret purchased the temporal prosperity of her family from the Master whom she served, under a singular condition, which is thus narrated by the historian of her grandson, the great Earl of Stair: "She lived to a great age, and at her death desired that she might not be put under ground, but that her coffin should be placed upright on one end of it, promising, that while she remained in that situation, the Dalrymples should continue in prosperity. What was the old lady's motive for such a request, or whether she really made such a promise, I cannot take upon me to determine; but it is certain her coffin stands upright in the aisle of the church of Kirkliston, the burial-place of the family." * The talents of this accomplished race were sufficient to have accounted for the dignities which many members of the family attained, without any supernatural assistance. But their extraordinary prosperity was attended by some equally singular family misfortunes, of which that which befell their eldest daughter was at once unaccountable and melancholy.

Miss Janet Dalrymple, daughter of the first Lord Stair, and Dame Margaret Ross, had engaged herself without the knowledge of her parents to the Lord Rutherford, who was not acceptable to them either on account of his political principles, or his want of fortune. The young couple broke a piece of gold together, and pledged their troth in the most solemn manner; and it is said the young lady imprecated dreadful evils on herself should she break her plighted faith. Shortly after, a suitor who was favored by Lord Stair, and still more so by his lady, paid his addresses to Miss Dalrymple. The young lady refused the proposal, and being pressed on the subject, confessed her secret engagement. Lady Stair, a woman accustomed to universal submission (for even her husband did not dare to contradict her), treated this objection as a trifle, and insisted upon her daughter yielding her consent to marry the new suitor, David Dunbar, son and heir of David Dunbar of Baldoon, in Wigtonshire. The first lover, a man of very high spirit, then interfered by letter, and insisted on the right he had acquired by his troth plighted with the young lady. Lady Stair sent him for answer, that her daughter, sensible of her undutiful behavior in entering into a contract unsanctioned by her parents, had retracted her unlawful vow, and now refused to fulfil her engagement with him.

The lover, in return, declined positively to receive such an answer from anyone but his mistress in person; and as she had to deal with a man who was both of a most determined character, and of too high condition to be trifled with, Lady Stair was obliged to consent to an interview between Lord Rutherford and her daughter. But she took care to be present in person, and argued the point with the disappointed and incensed lover with pertinacity equal to his own. She particularly insisted on the Levitical law, which declares that a woman shall be free of a vow which her pa-

* *Memoirs of John Earl of Stair, by an Impartial Hand.* London, printed for C. Cobbet, p. 7.

rents dissent from. This is the passage of Scripture she founded on :—

“If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond ; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

“If a woman also vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth ;

“And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her : then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.

“But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth ; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand : and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her.”—Numbers xxx. 2, 3, 4, 5.

While the mother insisted on these topics, the lover in vain conjured the daughter to declare her own opinion and feelings. She remained totally overwhelmed, as it seemed—mute, pale, and motionless as a statue. Only at her mother's command, sternly uttered, she summoned strength enough to restore to her plighted suitor the piece of broken gold, which was the emblem of her troth.

On this he burst forth into a tremendous passion, took leave of the mother with maledictions, and as he left the apartment, turned back to say to his weak, if not fickle mistress, “For, you, madam, you will be a world's wonder ;” a phrase by which some remarkable degree of calamity is usually implied. He went abroad, and returned not again. If the last Lord Rutherford was the unfortunate party, he must have been the third who bore that title, and who died in 1685.

The marriage betwixt Janet Dalrymple and David Dunbar of Baldoon now went forward, the bride showing no repugnance, but being absolutely passive in everything her mother commanded or advised. On the day of the marriage, which, as was then usual, was celebrated by a great assemblage of friends and relations, she was the same—sad, silent, and resigned, as it seemed, to her destiny. A lady, very nearly connected with the family, told the author that she had conversed on the subject with one of the brothers of the bride, a mere lad at the time, who had ridden before his sister to church. He said her hand, which lay on his as she held her arm round his waist, was as cold and damp as marble. But full of his new dress, and the part he acted in the procession, the circumstance, which he long afterward remembered with bitter sorrow and compunction, made no impression on him at the time.

The bridal feast was followed by dancing ; the bride and bridegroom retired as usual, when of a sudden the most wild and piercing cries were heard from the nuptial chamber. It was then the custom, to prevent any coarse pleasantry which old times admitted, that the key of the nuptial chamber should be intrusted to the bridegroom. He was called upon but refused at first to give it up, till the shrieks became so hideous that he was compelled to

hasten with others to learn the cause. On opening the door, they found the bridegroom lying across the threshold, dreadfully wounded, and streaming with blood. The bride was then sought for : She was found in the corner of the large chimney, having no covering save her shift, and that dabbled in gore. There she sat grinning at them, mopping and mowing, as I heard the expression used ; in a word, absolutely insane. The only words she spoke were, "Take up your bonny bridegroom." She survived this horrible scene little more than a fortnight, having been married on the 24th of August, and dying on the 12th of September, 1669.

The unfortunate Baldoon recovered from his wounds, but sternly prohibited all inquiries respecting the manner in which he had received them. If a lady, he said, asked him any questions upon the subject, he would neither answer her nor speak to her again while he lived ; if a gentleman, he would consider it as a mortal affront, and demand satisfaction as having received such. He did not very long survive the dreadful catastrophe, having met with a fatal injury by a fall from his horse, as he rode between Leith and Holyrood House, of which he died the next day, 28th March, 1682. Thus a few years removed all the principal actors in this frightful tragedy. It was difficult at that time to become acquainted with the history of a Scottish family above the lower rank ; and strange things sometimes took place there, into which even the law did not scrupulously inquire.

The credulous Mr. Law says, generally, that the Lord President Stair had a daughter, who "being married, the night she was *bride in* (that is, bedded bride), was taken from her bridegroom and *hauled* (dragged) through the house (by spirits we are given to understand), and soon afterward died. Another daughter," he says, "was possessed by an evil spirit."

My friend, Mr. Sharpe, gives another edition of the tale. According to his information, it was the bridegroom who wounded the bride. The marriage, according to this account, had been against her mother's inclination, who had given her consent in these ominous words ; "You may marry him, but soon shall you repent it."

I find still another account darkly insinuated in some highly scurrilous and abusive verses, of which I have an original copy. They are docketed as being written "Upon the late Viscount Stair and his family, by Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw. The marginals by William Dunlop, writer in Edinburgh, a son of the Laird of Househill, and nephew to the said Sir William Hamilton." There was a bitter and personal quarrel and rivalry betwixt the author of this libel, a name which it richly deserves, and Lord President Stair ; and the lampoon, which is written with much more malice than art, bears the following motto :

Stair's neck, mind, wife, sons, grandson, and the rest,
Are wry, false, witch, pests, parricide, possessed.

This malignant satirist, who calls up all the misfortunes of the family, does not forget the fatal bridal of Baldoon. He seems,

though his verses are as obscure as unpoetical, to intimate, that the violence done to the bridegroom was by the intervention of the foul fiend, to whom the young lady had resigned herself, in case she should break her contract with her first lover. His hypothesis is inconsistent with the account given in the note upon Law's Memorials, but easily reconcilable to the family tradition.

In al Stair's offspring we no difference know,
They doe the females as the males bestow;
So he of's daughter's marriage gave the ward,
Like a true vassal, to Glenluce's Laird;
He knew what she did to her suitor plight,
If she her faith to Rutherford should slight,
Which, like his own, for greed he broke outright.
Nick did Baldoon's posterior right deride,
And as first substitute, did seize the bride;
Whate'er he to his mistress did or said,
He drew the bridegroom from the nuptial bed,
Into the chimney did so his rival maul,
His bruised bones ne'er were cured but by the fall.*

One of the marginal notes ascribed to William Dunlop applies to the above lines. "She had betrothed herself to Lord Rutherford under horrid imprecations, and afterward married Baldoon, his nevy, and her mother was the cause of her breach of faith."

The same tragedy is alluded to in the following couplet and note:—

What train of curses that base brood pursues,
When the young nephew weds old uncle's spouse.

The note on the word *uncle* explains it as meaning "Rutherford, who should have married the Lady Baldoon, was Baldoon's uncle." The poetry of this satire on Lord Stair and his family was, as already noticed, written by Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw,† a rival of Lord Stair for the situation of President of the Court of Session; a person much inferior to that great lawyer in talents, and equally ill-treated by the calumny or just satire of his contemporaries, as an unjust and partial judge. Some of the notes are by that curious and laborious antiquary, Robert Milne, who, as a virulent Jacobite, willingly lent a hand to blacken the family of Stair.‡

* The fall from his horse, by which he was killed.

† I have compared the satire, which occurs in the first volume of the curious little collection called a Book of Scottish Pasquils, 1827, with that which has a more full text, and more extended notes, and which is in my own possession, by gift of Thomas Thomson, Esq., Register-Depute. In the second Book of Pasquils, p. 72, is a most abusive epitaph on Sir James Hamilton of Whitelaw.

‡ [There appeared in the *Edinburgh Evening Post* of October 10, 1840 (and afterward in the *Lives of the Lindsays*, p. 459), a letter dated September 5th, 1823, addressed by Sir J. Horne Dalrymple Elphinstone, Bart., to the late Sir James Stewart Denham of Coltness, Bart., both descendants of Lord President Stair, from which it appears that, according to the traditional creed of the Dalrymple family, the Bride's unhappy lover, Lord Ruther-

Another poet of the period, with a very different purpose, has left an elegy, in which he darkly hints at and bemoans the fate of the ill-starred young person, whose very uncommon calamity Whitelaw, Dunlop, and Milne, thought a fitting subject for buffoonery and ribaldry. This bard of milder mood was Andrew Symson, before the Revolution minister of Kirkinner, in Galloway, and, after his expulsion as an Episcopalian, following the humble occupation of a printer in Edinburgh. He furnished the family of Baldoon, with which he appears to have been intimate, with an elegy on the tragic event in their family. In this piece he treats the mournful occasion of the bride's death with mysterious solemnity.

The verses bear this title—"On the unexpected death of the virtuous Lady Mrs. Janet Dalrymple, Lady Baldoon, younger," and afford us the precise dates of the catastrophe, which could not otherwise have been easily ascertained. "Nupta August 12. Domum Ducta August 24. Obiit September 12. Sepult. September 30, 1669." The form of the elegy is a dialogue betwixt a passenger and a domestic servant. The first, recollecting that he had passed that way lately, and seen all around enlivened by the appearance of mirth and festivity, is desirous to know what had changed so gay a scene into mourning. We preserve the reply of the servant as a specimen of Mr. Symson's verses, which are not of the first quality:—

—————Sir, 'tis truth you've told,
We did enjoy great mirth; but now, ah me!
Our joyful song's turn'd to an elegy.
A virtuous lady, not long since a bride,
Was to a hopeful plant by marriage tied,
And brought home hither. We did all rejoice,
Even for her sake. But presently our voice
Was turn'd to mourning for that little time
That she'd enjoyed: She waned in her prime,
For Atropos, with her impartial knife,
Soon cut her thread, and therewithal her life;
And for the time we may it well remember,
It being in unfortunate September;
Where we must leave her till the resurrection,
'Tis then the Saints enjoy their full perfection.*

Mr. Symson also poured forth his elegiac strains upon the fate of the widowed bridegroom, on which subject, after a long and querulous effusion, the poet arrives at the sound conclusion, that if Baldoon had walked on foot, which it seems was his general custom, he would have escaped perishing by a fall from horse-back. As the work in which it occurs is so scarce as almost to be

ford, had found means to be secreted, in the nuptial chamber, and that the wound of the bridegroom, Sir David Dunbar of Baldoon, was inflicted by Rutherford's hand.—J. G. LOCKHART.]

* This elegy is reprinted in the appendix to a topographical work by the same author, entitled *A Large Description of Galloway*, by Andrew Symson, Minister of Kirkinner (1684), 8vo; W. and C. Tait, Edinburgh, 1823. The reverend gentleman's elegies are bound up with the *Tripatriarchicon* (1705) a religious poem from the Biblical History, by the same author.

unique, and as it gives us the most full account of one of the actors in this tragic tale which we have rehearsed, we will, at the risk of being tedious, insert some short specimens of Mr. Symson's composition. It is entitled—

“A funeral Elegie, occasioned by the sad and much lamented death of that worthily respected and very much accomplished gentleman, David Dunbar, younger of Baldoon, only son and apparent heir to the right worshipful Sir David Dunbar of Baldoon, Knight Baronet. He departed this life on March 28, 1682, having received a bruise by a fall, as he was riding the day preceding betwixt Leith and Holy-Rood-House; and was honorably interred in the Abbey church of Holy-Rood-House, on April 4, 1682.”

Men might, and very justly too, conclude
Me guilty of the worst ingratitude,
Should I be silent, or should I forbear
At this sad accident to shed a tear;
A tear! said I? ah! that's a petit thing,
A very lean, slight, slender offering,
Too mean, I'm sure, for me, wherewith t'attend
The unexpected funeral of my friend—
A glass of briny tears charged up to th' brim
Would be too few for me to shed for him.

The poet proceeds to state his intimacy with the deceased, and the constancy of the young man's attendance on public worship, which was regular, and had such effect upon two or three others that were influenced by his example,

So that my Muse 'gainst Priscian avers,
He, only he, *were* my parishioners;
Yea, and my only hearers.

He then describes the deceased in person and manners, from which it appears that more accomplishments were expected in the composition of a fine gentleman in ancient than modern times:—

His body, though not very large or tall,
Was sprightly, active, yea, and strong withal.
His constitution was, if right I've guessed,
Blood mixt with choler, said to be the best.
In's gesture, converse, speech, discourse, attire,
He practis'd that which wise men still admire,
Commend, and recommend. What's that? you'll say;
'Tis this: He ever choos'd the middle way
'Twixt both th' extremes. Almost in ev'ry thing
He did the like, 'tis worth our noticing:
Sparing, yet not a niggard; liberal,
And yet not lavish or a prodigal,
As knowing when to spend and when to spare;
And that's a lesson which not many are
Acquainted with. He bashful was, yet daring
When he saw cause, and yet therein but sparing;
Familiar, yet not common, for he knew
To condescend, and keep his distance too.
He us'd, and that most commonly, to go
On foot; I wish that he had still done so.

Th' affairs of court were unto him well known,
 And yet meanwhile he slighted not his own ;
 He knew full well how to behave at court,
 And yet but seldome did thereto resort ;
 But lov'd the country life, choos'd to inure
 Himself to past'rage and agriculture :
 Proving, improving, ditching, trenching, draining,
 Viewing, reviewing, and by those means gaining :
 Planting, transplanting, levelling, erecting
 Walls, chambers, houses, terraces ; projecting
 Now this, now that device, this draught, that measure,
 That might advance his profit with his pleasure.
 Quick in his bargains, honest in commerce,
 Just in his dealings, being much averse
 From quirks of law, still ready to refer
 His cause t' an honest country arbiter.
 He was acquainted with cosmography,
 Arithmetic, and modern history ;
 With architecture and such arts as these,
 Which I may call specifick sciences
 Fit for a gentleman ; and surely he
 That knows them not, at least in some degree,
 May brook the title, but he wants the thing,
 Is but a shadow scarce worth noticing.
 He learned the French, be't spoken to his praise,
 In very little more than fourty days.

Then comes the full burst of woe, in which, instead of saying much himself, the poet informs us what the ancients would have said on such an occasion :

A heathen poet, at the news, no doubt,
 Would have exclaimed, and furiously cry'd out
 Against the fates, the destinies, and starrs,
 What ! this the effect of planetarie wars !
 We might have seen him rage and rave, yea worse,
 'Tis very like we might have heard him curse
 The year, the month, the day, the hour, the place,
 The company, the wager, and the race ;
 Decry all recreations with the names
 Of Isthmian, Pythian, and Olympic games ;
 Exclaim against them all, both old and new,
 Both the Nemæan and the Lethæan too :
 Adjudge all persons under highest pain
 Always to walk on foot, and then again,
 Order all horses to be hough'd, that we
 Might never more the like adventure see.

Supposing our readers have had enough of Mr. Symson's verses, and finding nothing more in his poem worthy of transcription, we return to the tragic story.

It is needless to point out to the intelligent reader that the witchcraft of the mother consisted only in the ascendancy of a powerful mind over a weak and melancholy one, and that the harshness with which she exercised her superiority in a case of delicacy had driven her daughter first to despair, then to frenzy. Accordingly, the author has endeavored to explain the tragic tale on this principle. Whatever resemblance Lady Ashton may be

supposed to possess to the celebrated Dame Margaret Ross, the reader must not suppose that there was any idea of tracing the portrait of the first Lord Viscount Stair in the tricky and mean-spirited Sir William Ashton. Lord Stair, whatever might be his moral qualities, was certainly one of the first statesmen and lawyers of his age.

The imaginary castle of Wolf's Crag has been identified by some lover of locality with that of Fast Castle. The author is not competent to judge of the resemblance betwixt the real and imaginary scene, having never seen Fast Castle except from the sea. But fortalices of this description are found occupying, like ospreys' nests, projecting rocks or promontories, in many parts of the eastern coast of Scotland, and the position of Fast Castle seems certainly to resemble that of Wolf's Crag as much as any other, while its vicinity to the mountain ridge of Lammermoor renders the assimilation a probable one.

We have only to add, that the death of the unfortunate bridegroom, by a fall from horseback, has been in the novel transferred to the no less unfortunate lover.*

* [Note B. Illness of the Author, and dictation of the Novel.]

PRELIMINARY.

By cauk and keel to win your bread,
Wi' whigmaleeries for them wha need,
Whilk is a gentle trade indeed
To carry the gaberlunzie on.

OLD SONG.

FEW have been in my secret while I was compiling these narratives, nor is it probable that they will ever become public during the life of their author. Even were that event to happen, I am not ambitious of the honored distinction, *digito monstrari*. I confess that, were it safe to cherish such dreams at all, I should more enjoy the thought of remaining behind the curtain unseen, like the ingenious manager of Punch and his wife Joan, and enjoying the astonishment and conjectures of my audience. Then might I, perchance, hear the productions of the obscure Peter Pattieson praised by the judicious, and admired by the feeling, engrossing the young, and attracting even the old; while the critic traced their fame up to some name of literary celebrity, and the question when and by whom these tales were written filled up the pause of conversation in a hundred circles and coteries. This I may never enjoy during my lifetime; but further than this, I am certain, my vanity should never induce me to aspire.

I am too stubborn in habits and too little polished in manners to envy or aspire to the honors assigned to my literary contemporaries. I could not think a whit more highly of myself were I even found worthy to "come in place as a lion" for a winter in the great metropolis. I could not rise, turn round, and show all my honors, from the shaggy mane to the tufted tail, roar you an 'twere any nightingale, and so lie down again like a well-behaved beast of show, and all at the cheap and easy rate of a cup of coffee, and a slice of bread and butter as thin as a wafer. And I could ill stomach the fulsome flattery with which the lady of the evening indulges her show monsters on such occasions, as she crams her parrots with sugar-plums, in order to make them talk before company. I cannot be tempted to "come aloft" for these marks of distinction, and, like imprisoned Samson, I would rather remain—if such must be the alternative—all my life in the mill house, grinding for my very bread, than be brought forth to make sport for the Philistine lords and ladies. This proceeds from no dislike, real or affected, to the aristocracy of these realms. But they have their place, and I have mine; and, like the iron and earthen vessels in the old fable, we can scarce come into collision

without my being the sufferer in every sense. It may be otherwise with the sheets which I am now writing. These may be opened and laid aside at pleasure; by amusing themselves with the perusal, the great will excite no false hopes; by neglecting or condemning them, they will inflict no pain; and how seldom can they converse with those whose minds have toiled for their delight, without doing either the one or the other.

In the better and wiser tone of feeling, which Ovid only expresses in one line to retract in that which follows, I can address these quires—

Parve, nec invideo, sine me, liber, ibis in urbem.

Nor do I join the regret of the illustrious exile, that he himself could not in person accompany the volume which he sent forth to the mart of literature, pleasure, and luxury. Were there not a hundred similar instances on record, the fate of my poor friend and school-fellow, Dick Tinto, would be sufficient to warn me against seeking happiness in the celebrity which attaches itself to a successful cultivator of the fine arts.

Dick Tinto, when he wrote himself artist, was wont to derive his origin from the ancient family of Tinto of that ilk, in Lanarkshire, and occasionally hinted that he had somewhat derogated from his gentle blood, in using the pencil for his principal means of support. But if Dick's pedigree was correct, some of his ancestors must have suffered a more heavy declension, since the good man his father executed the necessary, and, I trust, the honest but certainly not very distinguished, employment of tailor in ordinary to the village of Langdirdum in the west. Under his humble roof was Richard born, and to his father's humble trade was Richard, greatly contrary to his inclination, early indentured. Old Mr. Tinto had, however, no reason to congratulate himself upon having compelled the youthful genius of his son to forsake its natural bent. He fared like the schoolboy who attempts to stop with his finger the spout of a water cistern, while the stream, exasperated at this compression, escapes by a thousand uncalculated spirts, and wets him all over for his pains. Even so fared the senior Tinto, when his hopeful apprentice not only exhausted all the chalk in making sketches upon the shop-board, but even executed several caricatures of his father's best customers, who began loudly to murmur that it was too hard to have their persons deformed by the vestments of the father, and to be at the same time turned into ridicule by the pencil of the son. This led to discredit and loss of practice, until the old tailor, yielding to destiny and to the entreaties of his son, permitted him to attempt his fortune in a line for which he was better qualified.

There was about this time, in the village of Langdirdum, a peripatetic brother of the brush, who exercised his vocation *sub Jove frigido*, the object of admiration to all the boys of the village, but especially to Dick Tinto. The age had not yet adopted, amongst other unworthy retrenchments, that illiberal measure of economy

which, supplying by written characters the lack of symbolical representation, closes one open and easy accessible avenue of instruction and emolument against the students of the fine arts. It was not yet permitted to write upon the plastered door-way of an alehouse or the suspended sign of an inn, "The Old Magpie," or "The Saracen's Head," substituting that cold description for the lively effigies of the plumed chatterer or the turban'd frown of the terrific soldan. That early and more simple age considered alike the necessities of all ranks, and depicted the symbols of good cheer so as to be obvious to all capacities; well judging that a man who could not read a syllable might nevertheless love a pot of good ale as well as his better-educated neighbors, or even as the parson himself. Acting upon this liberal principle, publicans as yet hung forth the painted emblems of their calling, and sign-painters, if they seldom feasted, did not at least absolutely starve.

To a worthy of this decayed profession, as we have already intimated, Dick Tinto became an assistant; and thus, as is not unusual among heaven-born geniuses in this department of the fine arts, began to paint before he had any notion of drawing.

His talent for observing nature soon induced him to rectify the errors and soar above the instructions of his teacher. He particularly shone in painting horses, that being a favorite sign in the Scottish villages; and, in tracing his progress, it is beautiful to observe how, by degrees, he learned to shorten the backs and prolong the legs of these noble animals, until they came to look less like crocodiles, and more like nags. Detraction, which always pursues merit with strides proportioned to its advancement, has indeed alleged that Dick once upon a time painted a horse with five legs, instead of four. I might have rested his defence upon the license allowed to that branch of his profession, which, as it permits all sorts of singular and irregular combinations, may be allowed to extend itself so far as to bestow a limb supernumerary on a favorite subject. But the cause of a deceased friend is sacred; and I disdain to bottom it so superficially. I have visited the sign in question, which yet swings exalted in the village of Langdirdum; and I am ready to depone upon oath, that what has been idly mistaken or misrepresented as being the fifth leg of the horse is, in fact, the tail of that quadruped, and, considered with reference to the posture in which he is delineated, forms a circumstance introduced and managed with great and successful, though daring, art. The nag being represented in a rampant or rearing posture, the tail, which is prolonged till it touches the ground, appears to form a *point d'appui*, and gives the firmness of a tripod to the figure, without which it would be difficult to conceive, placed as the feet are, how the courser could maintain his ground without tumbling backward. This bold conception has fortunately fallen into the custody of one by whom it is duly valued; for, when Dick, in his more advanced state of proficiency, became dubious of the propriety of so daring a deviation from the established rules of art, and was desirous to execute a picture of the publican himself in exchange for this juvenile production, the courteous offer was de-

clined by his judicious employer, who had observed, it seems, that when his ale failed to do its duty in conciliating his guests, one glance at his sign was sure to put them in good humor.

It would be foreign to my present purpose to trace the steps by which Dick Tinto improved his touch, and corrected, by the rules of art, the luxuriance of a fevered imagination. The scales fell from his eyes on viewing the sketches of a contemporary, the Scottish Teniers, as Wilkie has been deservedly styled. He threw down the brush, took up the crayons, and, amid hunger and toil and suspense and uncertainty, pursued the path of his profession under better auspices than those of his original master. Still the first rude emanations of his genius (like the nursery rhymes of Pope, could these be recovered) will be dear to the companions of Dick Tinto's youth. There is a tankard and gridiron painted over the door of an obscure change-house in the Back-wynd of Gandercleugh—but I feel I must tear myself from the subject, or dwell on it too long.

Amid his wants and struggles, Dick Tinto had recourse, like his brethren, to levying that tax upon the vanity of mankind which he could not extract from their taste and liberality—in a word, he painted portraits. It was in this more advanced state of proficiency, when Dick had soared above his original line of business, and highly disdained any allusion to it, that, after having been estranged for several years, we again met in the village of Gandercleugh, I holding my present situation, and Dick painting copies of the human face divine at a guinea a head. This was a small premium, yet, in the first burst of business, it more than sufficed for all Dick's moderate wants; so that he occupied an apartment at the Wallace Inn, cracked his jest with impunity even upon mine host himself, and lived in respect and observance with the chambermaid, hostler, and waiter.

Those halcyon days were too serene to last long. When his honor the Laird of Gandercleugh, with his wife and three daughters, the minister, the gauger, mine esteemed patron Mr. Jedediah Cleishbotham, and some round dozen of the feuars and farmers, had been consigned to immortality by Tinto's brush, custom began to slacken, and it was impossible to wring more than crowns and half crowns from the hard hands of the peasants whose ambition led them to Dick's painting room.

Still, though the horizon was overclouded, no storm for some time ensued. Mine host had Christian faith with a lodger who had been a good paymaster as long as he had the means. And from a portrait of our landlord himself, grouped with his wife and daughters, in the style of Rubens, which suddenly appeared in the best parlor, it was evident that Dick had found some mode of bartering art for the necessities of life.

Nothing, however, is more precarious than resources of this nature. It was observed that Dick became in his turn the whetstone of mine host's wit, without venturing either at defence or retaliation; that his easel was transferred to a garret-room, in which there was scarce space for it to stand upright; and that he

no longer ventured to join the weekly club, of which he had been once the life and soul. In short, Dick Tinto's friends feared that he had acted like the animal called the sloth, which, having eaten up the last green leaf upon the tree where it had established itself, ends by tumbling down from the top, and dying of inanition. I ventured to hint this to Dick, recommended his transferring the exercise of his inestimable talent to some other sphere, and forsaking the common which he might be said to have eaten bare.

"There is an obstacle to my change of residence," said my friend, grasping my hand with a look of solemnity.

"A bill due to my landlord, I am afraid?" replied I, with heartfelt sympathy; "if any part of my slender means can assist in this emergency——"

"No, by the soul of Sir Joshua!" answered the generous youth, "I will never involve a friend in the consequences of my own misfortune. There is a mode by which I can regain my liberty; and to creep even through a common sewer is better than to remain in prison."

I did not perfectly understand what my friend meant. The muse of painting appeared to have failed him, and what other goddess he could invoke in his distress was a mystery to me. We parted, however, without further explanation, and I did not again see him until three days after, when he summoned me to partake of the *foy* with which his landlord proposed to regale him ere his departure for Edinburgh.

I found Dick in high spirits, whistling while he buckled the small knapsack which contained his colors, brushes, palettes, and clean shirt. That he parted on the best terms with mine host was obvious from the cold beef set forth in the low parlor, flanked by two mugs of admirable brown stout; and I own my curiosity was excited concerning the means through which the face of my friend's affairs had been so suddenly improved. I did not suspect Dick of dealing with the devil, and by what earthly means he had extricated himself thus happily I was at a total loss to conjecture.

He perceived my curiosity, and took me by the hand. "My friend," he said, "fain would I conceal, even from you, the degradation to which it has been necessary to submit in order to accomplish an honorable retreat from Gandercleugh. But what avails attempting to conceal that which must needs betray itself even by its superior excellence? All the village—all the parish—all the world—will soon discover to what poverty has reduced Richard Tinto."

A sudden thought here struck me—I had observed that our landlord wore, on that memorable morning, a pair of bran new velveteens, instead of his ancient thicksets.

"What," said I, drawing my right hand, with the forefinger and thumb pressed together, nimbly from my right haunch to my left shoulder, "you have condescended to resume the paternal arts to which you were first bred—long stitches, ha, Dick?"

He repelled this unlucky conjecture with a frown and a pshaw, indicative of indignant contempt, and, leading me into another

room, showed me, resting against the wall, the majestic head of Sir William Wallace, given as when severed from the trunk by the orders of the felon Edward.

The painting was executed on boards of a substantial thickness, and the top decorated with irons, for suspending the honored effigy upon a sign-post.

"There," he said, "my friend, stands the honor of Scotland, and my shame—yet not so—rather the shame of those who, instead of encouraging art in its proper sphere, reduce it to these unbecoming and unworthy extremities."

I endeavored to smooth the ruffled feelings of my misused and indignant friend. I reminded him that he ought not, like the stag in the fable, to despise the quality which had extricated him from difficulties in which his talents as a portrait or landscape painter had been found unavailing. Above all, I praised the execution, as well as conception, of his painting, and reminded him that, far from feeling dishonored by so superb a specimen of his talents being exposed to the general view of the public, he ought rather to congratulate himself upon the augmentation of his celebrity to which its public exhibition must necessarily give rise.

"You are right, my friend—you are right," replied poor Dick, his eye kindling with enthusiasm; "why should I shun the name of an—an"—(he hesitated for a phrase)—"an out-of-door artist? Hogarth has introduced himself in that character in one of his best engravings—Domenichino, or somebody else, in ancient times—Morland in our own, have exercised their talents in this manner. And wherefore limit to the rich and higher classes alone the delight which the exhibition of works of art is calculated to inspire into all classes? Statues are placed in the open air; why should Painting be more niggardly in displaying her masterpieces than her sister, Sculpture? And yet, my friend, we must part suddenly: the carpenter is coming in an hour to put up the—the emblem; and truly, with all my philosophy, and your consolatory encouragement to boot, I would rather wish to leave Gandercleugh before that operation commences."

We partook of our genial host's parting banquet, and I escorted Dick on his walk to Edinburgh. We parted about a mile from the village, just as we heard the distant cheer of the boys which accompanied the mounting of the new symbol of the Wallace Head. Dick Tinto mended his pace to get out of hearing—so little had either early practice or recent philosophy reconciled him to the character of a sign-painter.

"In Edinburgh, Dick's talents were discovered and appreciated, and he received dinners and hints from several distinguished judges of the fine arts. But these gentlemen dispensed their criticism more willingly than their cash, and Dick thought he needed cash more than criticism. He therefore sought London, the universal mart of talent, and where, as is usual in general marts of most descriptions, much more of each community is exposed to sale than can ever find purchasers.

Dick, who, in serious earnest, was supposed to have consid-

erable natural talents for his profession, and whose vain and sanguine disposition never permitted him to doubt for a moment of ultimate success, threw himself headlong into the crowd which jostled and struggled for notice and preferment. He elbowed others, and was elbowed himself; and finally, by dint of intrepidity, fought his way into some notice, painted for the prize at the Institution, had pictures at the exhibition at Somerset House, and damned the hanging committee. But poor Dick was doomed to lose the field he fought so gallantly. In the fine arts, there is scarce an alternative betwixt distinguished success and absolute failure; and as Dick's zeal and industry were unable to ensure the first, he fell into the distresses which, in his condition, were the natural consequences of the latter alternative. He was for a time patronized by one or two of those judicious persons who make a virtue of being singular, and of pitching their own opinions against those of the world in matters of taste and criticism. But they soon tired of poor Tinto, and laid him down as a load, upon the principle on which a spoiled child throws away its plaything. Misery, I fear, took him up, and accompanied him to a premature grave, to which he was carried from an obscure lodging in Swallow Street, where he had been dunned by his landlady within doors, and watched by bailiffs without, until death came to his relief. A corner of the *Morning Post* noticed his death, generously adding that his manner displayed considerable genius, though his style was rather sketchy; and referred to an advertisement which announced that Mr. Varnish, a well-known printseller, had still on hand a very few drawings and paintings by Richard Tinto, Esquire, which those of the nobility and gentry who wished to complete their collections of modern art were invited to visit without delay. So ended Dick Tinto! a lamentable proof of the great truth, that in the fine arts mediocrity is not permitted, and that he who cannot ascend to the very top of the ladder will do well not to put his foot upon it at all.

The memory of Tinto is dear to me, from the recollections of the many conversations which we have had together, most of them turning upon my present task. He was delighted with my progress, and talked of an ornamented and illustrated edition, with heads, vignettes, and *culs de lampe*, all to be designed by his own patriotic and friendly pencil. He prevailed upon an old sergeant of invalids to sit to him in the character of Bothwell, the life-guardsmen of Charles the Second, and the bellman of Ganderclough in that of David Deans. But while he thus proposed to unite his own powers with mine for the illustration of these narratives, he mixed many a dose of salutary criticism with the panegyrics which my composition was at times so fortunate as to call forth.

"Your characters," he said, "my dear Pattieson, make too much use of the *gob bar*; they *patter* too much—(an elegant phraseology, which Dick had learned while painting the scenes of an itinerant company of players)—there is nothing in whole pages but mere chat and dialogue."

"The ancient philosopher," said I in reply, "was wont to say, 'Speak, that I may know thee'; and how is it possible for an author to introduce his *personæ dramatis* to his readers in a more interesting and effectual manner than by the dialogue in which each is represented as supporting his own appropriate character?"

"It is a false conclusion," said Tinto; "I hate it, Peter, as I hate an unfilled can. I will grant you, indeed, that speech is a faculty of some value in the intercourse of human affairs, and I will not even insist on the doctrine of that Pythagorean toper who was of opinion that, over a bottle, speaking spoiled conversation. But I will not allow that a professor of the fine arts had occasion to embody the idea of his scene in language, in order to impress upon the reader its reality and its effect. On the contrary, I will be judged by most of your readers, Peter, should these tales ever become public, whether you have not given us a page of talk for every single idea which two words might have communicated, while the posture, and manner, and incident, accurately drawn and brought out by appropriate coloring, would have preserved all that was worthy of preservation, and saved these everlasting said he's and said she's with which it has been your pleasure to encumber your pages."

I replied, "That he confounded the operations of the pencil and the pen; that the serene and silent art, as painting has been called by one of our first living poets, necessarily appealed to the eye, because it had not the organs for addressing the ear; whereas poetry, or that species of composition which approached to it, lay under the necessity of doing absolutely the reverse, and addressed itself to the ear, for the purpose of exciting that interest which it could not attain through the medium of the eye."

Dick was not a whit staggered by my argument, which he contended was founded on misrepresentation. "Description," he said, "was to the author of a romance exactly what drawing and tinting were to a painter; words were his colors, and, if properly employed, they could not fail to place the scene which he wished to conjure up as effectually before the mind's eye as the tablet or canvas presents it to the bodily organ. The same rules," he contended, "applied to both, and an exuberance of dialogue, in the former case, was a verbose and laborious mode of composition which went to confound the proper art of fictitious narrative with that of the drama, a widely different species of composition, of which dialogue was the very essence, because all, excepting the language to be made use of, was presented to the eye by the dresses and persons and actions of the performers upon the stage. But as nothing," said Dick, "can be more dull than a long narrative written upon the plan of a drama, so where you have approached most near to that species of composition, by indulging in prolonged scenes of mere conversation, the course of your story has become chill and constrained, and you have lost the power of arresting the attention and exciting the imagination, in which upon other occasions you may be considered as having succeeded tolerably well."

I made my bow in requital of the compliment, which was probably thrown in by way of *placebo*, and expressed myself willing at least to make one trial of a more straightforward style of composition, in which my actors should do more and say less than in my former attempts of this kind. Dick gave me a patronizing and approving nod, and observed that, finding me so docile, he would communicate, for the benefit of my muse, a subject which he had studied with a view to his own art.

"The story," he said, "was by tradition affirmed to be truth, although, as upward of a hundred years had passed away since the events took place, some doubt upon the accuracy of all the particulars might be reasonably entertained."

When Dick Tinto had thus spoken, he rummaged his portfolio for the sketch from which he proposed one day to execute a picture of fourteen feet by eight. The sketch, which was cleverly executed, to use the appropriate phrase, represented an ancient hall, fitted up and furnished in what we now call the taste of Queen Elizabeth's age. The light, admitted from the upper part of the high casement, fell upon a female figure of exquisite beauty, who, in an attitude of speechless terror, appeared to watch the issue of a debate betwixt two other persons. The one was a young man, in the Vandyke dress common to the time of Charles I., who, with an air of indignant pride, testified by the manner in which he raised his head and extended his arm, seemed to be urging a claim of right, rather than of favor, to a lady whose age, and some resemblance in their features, pointed her out as the mother of the younger female, and who appeared to listen with a mixture of displeasure and impatience.

Tinto produced his sketch with an air of mysterious triumph, and gazed on it as a fond parent looks upon a hopeful child, while he anticipates the future figure he is to make in the world, and the height to which he will raise the honor of his family. He held it at arm's length from me—he held it closer—he placed it upon the top of a chest of drawers; closed the lower shutters of the casement, to adjust a downward and favorable light; fell back to the due distance; dragged me after him; shaded his face with his hand, as if to exclude all but the favorable object, and ended by spoiling a child's copy-book, which he rolled up so as to serve for the darkened tube of an amateur. I fancy my expressions of enthusiasm had not been in proportion to his own, for he presently exclaimed, with vehemence, "Mr. Pattieson, I used to think you had an eye in your head."

I vindicated my claim to the usual allowance of visual organs.

"Yet, on my honor," said Dick, "I would swear you had been born blind, since you have failed at the first glance to discover the subject and meaning of that sketch. I do not mean to praise my own performance, I leave these arts to others; I am sensible of my deficiencies, conscious that my drawing and coloring may be improved by the time I intend to dedicate to the art. But the conception—the expression—the positions—these tell the story to every one who looks at the sketch; and if I can finish the picture

without diminution of the original conception, the name of Tinto shall no more be smothered by the mists of envy and intrigue."

I replied, "That I admired the sketch exceedingly; but that, to understand its full merit, I felt it absolutely necessary to be informed of the subject."

"That is the very thing I complain of," answered Tinto; "you have accustomed yourself so much to these creeping twilight details of yours, that you are become incapable of receiving that instant and vivid flash of conviction which darts on the mind from seeing the happy and expressive combinations of a single scene, and which gather from the position, attitude, and countenance of the moment not only the history of the past lives of the personages represented, and the nature of the business on which they are immediately engaged, but lifts even the veil of futurity, and affords a shrewd guess at their future fortunes."

"In that case," replied I, "painting excels the Ape of the renowned Gines de Passamont, which only meddled with the past and the present; nay, she excels that very Nature who affords her subjects; for I protest to you, Dick, that were I permitted to peep into that Elizabeth chamber, and see the persons you have sketched conversing in flesh and blood, I should not be a jot nearer guessing the nature of their business than I am at this moment while looking at your sketch. Only generally, from the languishing look of the young lady, and the care you have taken to present a very handsome leg on the part of the gentleman, I presume there is some reference to a love affair between them."

"Do you really presume to form such a bold conjecture?" said Tinto. "And the indignant earnestness with which you see the man urge his suit—the unresisting and passive despair of the younger female—the stern air of inflexible determination in the elder woman, whose looks express at once consciousness that she is acting wrong, and a firm determination to persist in the course she has adopted——"

"If her looks express all this, my dear Tinto," replied I, interrupting him, "your pencil rivals the dramatic art of Mr. Puff in the Critic, who crammed a whole complicated sentence into the expressive shake of Lord Burleigh's head."

"My good friend, Peter," replied Tinto, "I observe you are perfectly incorrigible; however, I have compassion on your dullness, and am unwilling you should be deprived of the pleasure of understanding my picture, and of gaining, at the same time, a subject for your own pen. You must know then, last summer, while I was taking sketches on the coast of East-Lothian and Berwickshire, I was seduced into the mountains of Lammermoor by the account I received of some remains of antiquity in that district. Those with which I was most struck were the ruins of an ancient castle in which that Elizabeth chamber, as you call it, once existed. I resided for two or three days at a farm-house in the neighborhood, where the aged goodwife was well acquainted with the history of the castle, and the events which had taken place in it. One of these was of a nature so interesting and sin-

gular, that my attention was divided between my wish to draw the old ruins in landscape and to represent, in a history-piece, the singular events which have taken place in it. Here are my notes of the tale," said poor Dick, handing a parcel of loose scraps, partly scratched over with his pencil, partly with his pen, where outlines of caricatures, sketches of turrets, mills, old gables, and dovecots disputed the ground with his written memoranda.

I proceeded, however, to decipher the substance of the manuscript as well as I could, and wove it into the following Tale, in which, following in part, though not entirely, my friend Tinto's advice, I endeavored to render my narrative rather descriptive than dramatic. My favorite propensity, however, has at times overcome me, and my persons, like many others in this talking world, speak now and then a great deal more than they act.

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

When the last
 Laird of Ravenswood
 to Ravenswood shall
 ride,
 And woo a dead
 maiden to be his
 bride.



He shall
 stable his steed
 in the kelpies
 flood,
 And his name
 shall be lost for
 evermore.



CHAPTER FIRST.

Well, lords, we have not got that which we have;
'Tis not enough our foes are this time fled,
Being opposites of such repairing nature.

SECOND PART OF HENRY VI.

IN the gorge of a pass or mountain glen, ascending from the fertile plains of East-Lothian, there stood in former times an extensive castle, of which only the ruins are now visible. Its ancient proprietors were a race of powerful and warlike barons, who bore the same name with the castle itself, which was Ravenswood. Their line extended to a remote period of antiquity, and they had intermarried with the Douglasses, Humes, Swintons, Hays, and other families of power and distinction in the same country. Their history was frequently involved in that of Scotland itself, in whose annals their feats are recorded. The castle of Ravenswood, occupying, and in some measure commanding, a pass betwixt Berwickshire, or the Merse, as the south-eastern province of Scotland is termed, and the Lothians, was of importance both in time of foreign war and domestic discord. It was frequently besieged with ardor, and defended with obstinacy, and, of course, its owners played a conspicuous part in story. But their house had its revolutions, like all sublunary things; it became greatly declined from its splendor about the middle of the seventeenth century; and toward the period of the Revolution, the last proprietor of Ravenswood Castle saw himself compelled to part with the ancient family seat, and to remove himself to a lonely and sea-beaten tower,

which, situated on the bleak shores between Saint Abb's Head and the village of Eyemouth, looked out on the lonely and boisterous German Ocean. A black domain of wild pasture-land surrounded their new residence, and formed the remains of their property.

Lord Ravenswood, the heir of this ruined family, was far from bending his mind to his new condition of life. In the civil war of 1689, he had espoused the sinking side, and although he had escaped without the forfeiture of life or land, his blood had been attainted, and his title abolished. He was now called Lord Ravenswood only in courtesy.

This forfeited nobleman inherited the pride and turbulence, though not the fortune of his house, and, as he imputed the final declension of his family to a particular individual, he honored that person with his full portion of hatred. This was the very man who had now become, by purchase, proprietor of Ravenswood, and the domains of which the heir of the house now stood dispossessed. He was descended of a family much less ancient than that of Lord Ravenswood, and which had only risen to wealth and political importance during the great civil wars. He himself had been bred to the bar, and had held high offices in the state, maintaining through life the character of a skilful fisher in the troubled waters of a state divided by factions, and governed by delegated authority; and of one who contrived to amass considerable sums of money in a country where there was but little to be gathered, and who equally knew the value of wealth, and the various means of augmenting it, and using it as an engine of increasing his power and influence.

Thus qualified and gifted, he was a dangerous antagonist to the fierce and imprudent Ravenswood. Whether he had given him good cause for the enmity with which the Baron regarded him, was a point on which men spoke differently. Some said the quarrel arose merely from the vindictive spirit and envy of Lord Ravenswood, who could not patiently behold another, though by just and fair purchase, become the proprietor of the estate and castle of his forefathers. But the greater part of the public, prone to slander the wealthy in their absence, as to flatter them in their presence, held a less charitable opinion. They said, that the Lord Keeper (for to this height Sir William Ashton had ascended) had, previous to the final purchase of the estate of Ravenswood, been concerned in extensive pecuniary transactions with the former proprietor; and, rather intimating what was probable, than affirming anything positively, they asked which party was likely to have the advantage in

stating and enforcing the claims arising out of these complicated affairs, and more than hinted the advantages which the cool lawyer and able politician must necessarily possess over the hot, fiery, and imprudent character, whom he had involved in legal toils and pecuniary snares.

The character of the times aggravated these suspicions. "In those days there was no king in Israel." Since the departure of James VI. to assume the richer and more powerful crown of England, there had existed in Scotland contending parties, formed among the aristocracy, by whom, as their intrigues at the court of Saint James's chanced to prevail, the delegated powers of sovereignty were alternately swayed. The evils attending upon this system of government resembled those which afflict the tenants of an Irish estate, the property of an absentee. There was no supreme power, claiming and possessing a general interest with the community at large, to whom the oppressed might appeal from subordinate tyranny, either for justice or for mercy. Let a monarch be as indolent, as selfish, as much disposed to arbitrary power as he will, still, in a free country, his own interests are so clearly connected with those of the public at large, and the evil consequences to his own authority are so obvious and imminent when a different course is pursued, that common policy, as well as common feeling, point to the equal distribution of justice, and to the establishment of the throne in righteousness. Thus, even sovereigns, remarkable for usurpation and tyranny, have been found rigorous in the administration of justice among their subjects, in cases where their own power and passions were not compromised.

It is very different when the powers of sovereignty are delegated to the head of an aristocratic faction, rivaled and pressed closely in the race of ambition by an adverse leader. His brief and precarious enjoyment of power must be employed in rewarding his partisans, in extending his influence, in oppressing and crushing his adversaries. Even Abon Hassan, the most disinterested of all viceroys, forgot not during his caliphate of one day, to send a *douceur* of one thousand pieces of gold to his own household; and the Scottish viceregents, raised to power by the strength of their faction, failed not to embrace the same means of rewarding them.

The administration of justice, in particular, was infected by the most gross partiality. A case of importance scarcely occurred, in which there was not some ground for bias or partiality on the part of the judges, who were so little able to withstand the temptation, that the adage, "Show me the man,

and I will show you the law," became as prevalent as it was scandalous. One corruption led the way to others still more gross and profligate. The judge who lent his sacred authority in one case to support a friend, and in another to crush an enemy, and whose decisions were founded on family connections or political relations, could not be supposed inaccessible to direct personal motives; and the purse of the wealthy was too often believed to be thrown into the scale to weigh down the cause of the poor litigant. The subordinate officers of the law affected little scruple concerning bribery. Pieces of plate, and bags of money, were sent in presents to the king's counsel, to influence their conduct, and poured forth, says a contemporary writer, like billets of wood upon their floors, without even the decency of concealment.

In such times, it was not over uncharitable to suppose, that the statesman, practised in courts of law, and a powerful member of a triumphant cabal, might find and use means of advantage over his less skilful and less favored adversary; and if it had been supposed that Sir William Ashton's conscience had been too delicate to profit by these advantages, it was believed that his ambition and desire of extending his wealth and consequence, found as strong a stimulus in the exhortations of his lady, as the daring aim of Macbeth in the days of yore.

Lady Ashton was of a family more distinguished than that of her lord, an advantage which she did not fail to use to the uttermost, in maintaining and extending her husband's influence over others, and, unless she was greatly belied, her own over him. She had been beautiful, and was stately and majestic in her appearance. Endowed by nature with strong powers and violent passions, experience had taught her to employ the one, and to conceal, if not to moderate, the other. She was a severe and strict observer of the external forms, at least, of devotion; her hospitality was splendid even to ostentation; her address and manners, agreeable to the pattern most valued in Scotland at the period, were grave, dignified, and severely regulated by the rules of etiquette. Her character had always been beyond the breath of slander. And yet, with all these qualities to excite respect, Lady Ashton was seldom mentioned in the terms of love or affection. Interest,—the interest of her family, if not her own,—seemed too obviously the motive of her actions; and where this is the case, the sharp-judging and malignant public are not easily imposed upon by outward show. It was seen and ascertained, that, in her most graceful courtesies and compliments, Lady Ashton no more lost sight of her object, than the falcon in his airy wheel turns his quick eyes from his

destined quarry ; and hence, something of doubt and suspicion qualified the feelings with which her equals received her attentions. With her inferiors these feelings were mingled with fear ; an impression useful to her purposes, so far as it enforced ready compliance with her requests, and implicit obedience to her commands, but detrimental, because it cannot exist with affection or regard.

Even her husband, it is said, upon whose fortunes her talents and address had produced such emphatic influence, regarded her with respectful awe rather than confiding attachment ; and report said, there were times when he considered his grandeur as dearly purchased at the expense of domestic thralldom. Of this, however much might be suspected, but little could be accurately known ; Lady Ashton regarded the honor of her husband as her own, and was well aware how much that would suffer in the public eye should he appear a vassal to his wife. In all her arguments, his opinion was quoted as infallible ; his taste was appealed to, and his sentiments received, with the air of deference which a dutiful wife might seem to owe to a husband of Sir William Ashton's rank and character. But there was something under all this which rung false and hollow ; and to those who watched this couple with close, and perhaps malicious scrutiny, it seemed evident, that, in the haughtiness of a firmer character, higher birth, and more decided views of aggrandizement, the lady looked with some contempt on the husband, and that he regarded her with jealous fear, rather than with love or admiration.

Still, however, the leading and favorite interests of Sir William Ashton and his lady were the same, and they failed not to work in concert, although without cordiality, and to testify, in all exterior circumstances, that respect for each other, which they were aware was necessary to secure that of the public.

Their union was crowned with several children, of whom three survived. One, the eldest son, was absent on his travels ; the second, a girl of seventeen, and the third, a boy about three years younger, resided with their parents in Edinburgh, during the sessions of the Scottish Parliament and Privy Council, at other times in the old Gothic castle of Ravenswood, to which the Lord Keeper had made large additions in the style of the seventeenth century.

Allan Lord Ravenswood, the late proprietor of that ancient mansion and the large estate annexed to it, continued for some time to wage ineffectual war with his successor concerning various points to which their former

transactions had given rise, and which were successively determined in favor of the wealthy and powerful competitor, until death closed the litigation, by summoning Ravenswood to a higher bar. The thread of life, which had been long wasting, gave way during a fit of violent and impotent fury, with which he was assailed on receiving the news of the loss of a cause, founded, perhaps, rather in equity than in law, the last which he had maintained against his powerful antagonist. His son witnessed his dying agonies, and heard the curses which he breathed against his adversary, as if they had conveyed to him a legacy of vengeance. Other circumstances happened to exasperate a passion, which was, and had long been, a prevalent vice in the Scottish disposition.

It was a November morning, and the cliffs which overlooked the ocean were hung with thick and heavy mist, when the portals of the ancient and half-ruinous tower, in which Lord Ravenswood had spent the last and troubled years of his life, opened, that his mortal remains might pass forward to an abode yet more dreary and lonely. The pomp of attendance, to which the deceased had, in his latter years, been a stranger, was revived as he was about to be consigned to the realms of forgetfulness.

Banner after banner, with the various devices and coats of this ancient family and its connections, followed each other in mournful procession from under the low-browed archway of the courtyard. The principal gentry of the country attended in the deepest mourning, and tempered the pace of their long train of horses to the solemn march befitting the occasion. Trumpets, with banners of crape attached to them, sent forth their long and melancholy notes to regulate the movements of the procession. An immense train of inferior mourners and menials closed the rear, which had not yet issued from the castle-gate, when the van had reached the chapel where the body was to be deposited.

Contrary to the custom, and even to the law of the time, the body was met by a priest of the Scottish Episcopal communion, arrayed in his surplice, and prepared to read over the coffin of the deceased the funeral service of the church. Such had been the desire of Lord Ravenswood in his last illness, and it was readily complied with by the Tory gentlemen, or cavaliers, as they affected to style themselves, in which faction most of his kinsmen were enrolled. The Presbyterian church-judicatory of the bounds, considering the ceremony as a bravading insult upon their authority, had applied to the Lord Keeper, as the nearest privy councillor, for a warrant to prevent its being

carried into effect; so that, when the clergyman had opened his prayer-book, an officer of the law, supported by some armed men, commanded him to be silent. An insult, which fired the whole assembly with indignation, was particularly and instantly resented by the only son of the deceased, Edgar, popularly called the Master of Ravenswood, a youth of about twenty years of age. He clapped his hand on his sword, and bidding the official person to desist at his peril from further interruption, commanded the clergyman to proceed. The man attempted to enforce his commission, but as a hundred swords at once glittered in the air, he contented himself with protesting against the violence which had been offered to him in the execution of his duty, and stood aloof, a sullen and moody spectator of the ceremonial, muttering as one who should say, "You'll rue the day that clogs me with this answer."

The scene was worthy of an artist's pencil. Under the very arch of the house of death, the clergyman, affrighted at the scene, and trembling for his own safety, hastily and unwillingly rehearsed the solemn service of the church, and spoke dust to dust, and ashes to ashes, over ruined pride and decayed prosperity. Around stood the relations of the deceased, their countenances more in anger than in sorrow, and the drawn swords which they brandished forming a violent contrast with their deep mourning habits. In the countenance of the young man alone, resentment seemed for the moment overpowered by the deep agony with which he beheld his nearest and almost his only friend, consigned to the tomb of his ancestry. A relative observed him turn deadly pale, when, all rites being now duly observed, it became the duty of the chief mourner to lower down into the charnel vault, where mouldering coffins showed their tattered velvet and decayed plating, the head of the corpse which was to be their partner in corruption. He stepped to the youth and offered his assistance, which, by a mute motion, Edgar Ravenswood rejected. Firmly and without a tear, he performed that last duty. The stone was laid on the sepulchre, the door of the aisle was locked, and the youth took possession of its massive key.

As the crowd left the chapel, he paused on the steps which led to its Gothic chancel, "Gentlemen and friends," he said, "you have this day done no common duty to the body of your deceased kinsman. The rites of due observance, which, in other countries, are allowed as the due of the meanest Christian, would this day have been denied to the body of your relative—not certainly sprung of the meanest house in Scotland—had it not been assured to him by your courage. Others bury their

dead in sorrow and tears, in silence and in reverence; our funeral rites are marred by the intrusion of bailiffs and ruffians, and our grief—the grief due to our departed friend—is chased from our cheeks by the glow of just indignation. But it is well that I know from what quiver this arrow has come forth. It was only he that dug the grave who could have the mean cruelty to disturb the obsequies; and Heaven do as much to me and more, if I requite not to this man and his house the ruin and disgrace he has brought on me and mine!”

A numerous part of the assembly applauded this speech, as the spirited expression of just resentment; but the more cool and judicious regretted that it had been uttered. The fortunes of the heir of Ravenswood were too low to brave the further hostility which they imagined these open expressions of resentment must necessarily provoke. Their apprehensions, however, proved groundless, at least in the immediate consequences of this affair.

The mourners returned to the tower, there, according to a custom but recently abolished in Scotland, to carouse deep healths to the memory of the deceased, to make the house of sorrow ring with sounds of joviality and debauch, and to diminish, by the expense of a large and profuse entertainment, the limited revenues of the heir of him whose funeral they thus strangely honored. It was the custom, however, and on the present occasion it was fully observed. The tables swam in wine, the populace feasted in the courtyard, the yeomen in the kitchen and buttery; and two years' rent of Ravenswood's remaining property hardly defrayed the charge of the funeral revel. The wine did its office on all but the Master of Ravenswood—a title which he still retained, though forfeiture had attached to that of his father. He, while passing around the cup which he himself did not taste, soon listened to a thousand exclamations against the Lord Keeper, and passionate protestations of attachment to himself, and to the honor of his house. He listened with dark and sullen brow to ebullitions which he considered justly as equally evanescent with the crimson bubbles on the brink of the goblet, or at least with the vapors which its contents excited in the brains of the revelers around him.

When the last flask was emptied, they took their leave, with deep protestations—to be forgotten on the morrow, if, indeed, those who made them should not think it necessary for their safety to make a more solemn retractation.

Accepting their adieus with an air of contempt which he could scarce conceal, Ravenswood at length beheld his ruinous habitation cleared of his confluence of riotous guests, and re-

turned to the deserted hall, which now appeared doubly lonely from the cessation of that clamor to which it had so lately echoed. But its space was peopled by phantoms, which the imagination of the young heir conjured up before him—the tarnished honor and degraded fortunes of his house, the destruction of his own hopes, and the triumph of that family by whom they had been ruined. To a mind naturally of a gloomy cast, here was ample room for meditation, and the musings of young Ravenswood were deep and unwitnessed.

The peasant, who shows the ruins of the tower, which still crown the beetling cliff and behold the war of the waves, though no more tenanted save by the sea-mew and cormorant, even yet affirms, that on this fatal night the Master of Ravenswood, by the bitter exclamations of his despair, evoked some evil fiend, under whose malignant influence the future tissue of incidents was woven. Alas! what fiend can suggest more desperate counsels than those adopted under the guidance of our own violent and unresisted passions?

CHAPTER SECOND.

Over Gods forbode, then said the King,
That thou shouldst shoot at me.

WILLIAM BELL, CLIM O' THE CLEUGH, etc.

On the morning after the funeral, the legal officer, whose authority had been found insufficient to effect an interruption of the funeral solemnities of the late Lord Ravenswood, hastened to state before the Keeper the resistance which he had met with in the execution of his office.

The statesman was seated in a spacious library, once a banquetting-room in the old Castle of Ravenswood, as was evident from the armorial insignia still displayed on the carved roof, which was vaulted with Spanish chestnut, and on the stained glass of the casement, through which gleamed a dim yet rich light, on the long rows of shelves, bending under the weight of legal commentators and monkish historians, whose ponderous volumes formed the chief and most valued contents of a Scottish historian of the period. On the massive oaken table and reading-desk lay a confused mass of letters, petitions, and parchments; to toil amongst which was the pleasure at once and the plague of Sir William Ashton's life. His appearance was grave and even noble, well becoming one who held a high

office in the state ; and it was not, save after long and intimate conversation with him upon topics of pressing and personal interest, that a stranger could have discovered something vacillating and uncertain in his resolutions ; an infirmity of purpose, arising from a cautious and timid disposition, which, as he was conscious of its internal influence on his mind, he was, from pride as well as policy, most anxious to conceal from others.

He listened with great apparent composure to an exaggerated account of the tumult which had taken place at the funeral, of the contempt thrown on his own authority, and that of the church and state ; nor did he seem moved even by the faithful report of the insulting and threatening language which had been uttered by young Ravenswood and others, and obviously directed against himself. He heard, also, what the man had been able to collect, in a very distorted and aggravated shape, of the toasts which had been drunk, and the menaces uttered, at the subsequent entertainment. In fine, he made careful notes of the particulars, and of the names of the persons by whom, in case of need, an accusation, founded upon these violent proceedings could be witnessed and made good, and dismissed his informer, secure that he was now master of the remaining fortune, and even of the personal liberty, of young Ravenswood.

When the door had closed upon the officer of the law, the Lord Keeper remained for a moment in deep meditation ; then, starting from his seat, paced the apartment as one about to take a sudden and energetic resolution. “ Young Ravenswood,” he muttered, “ is now mine—he is my own—he has placed himself in my hand, and he shall bend or break. I have not forgot the determined and dogged obstinacy with which his father fought every point to the last, resisted every effort at compromise, embroiled me in lawsuits, and attempted to assail my character when he could not otherwise impugn my rights. This boy he has left behind him—this Edgar—this hot-headed, harebrained fool, has wrecked his vessel before she has cleared the harbor. I must see that he gains no advantage of some turning tide which may again float him off. These memoranda, properly stated to the Privy Council, cannot but be construed into an aggravated riot, in which the dignity both of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities stands committed. A heavy fine might be imposed ; an order for committing him to Edinburgh or Blackness Castle seems not improper ; even a charge of treason might be laid on many of these words and expressions, though God forbid I should prosecute the matter to that extent. No, I will not ;—I will not touch hi

life even if it should be in my power ;—and yet, if he lives till a change of times, what follows ?—Restitution—perhaps revenge. I know Athole promised his interest to old Ravenswood, and here is his son already bandying and making a faction by his own contemptible influence. What a ready tool he would be for the use of those who are watching the downfall of our administration ! ”

While these thoughts were agitating the mind of the wily statesman, and while he was persuading himself that his own interest and safety, as well as those of his friends and party, depended on using the present advantage to the uttermost against young Ravenswood, the Lord Keeper sat down to his desk, and proceeded to draw up, for the information of the Privy Council, an account of the disorderly proceedings which, in contempt of his warrant, had taken place at the funeral of Lord Ravenswood. The names of most of the parties concerned, as well as the fact itself, would, he was well aware, sound odiously in the ears of his colleagues in administration, and most likely instigate them to make an example of young Ravenswood, at least, *in terrorem*.

It was a point of delicacy, however, to select such expressions as might infer the young man's culpability, without seeming directly to urge it, which, on the part of Sir William Ashton, his father's ancient antagonist, could not but appear odious and invidious. While he was in the act of composition, laboring to find words which might indicate Edgar Ravenswood to be the cause of the uproar, without specifically making such a charge, Sir William, in a pause of his task, chanced, in looking upward, to see the crest of the family (for whose heir he was whetting the arrows, and disposing the toils of the law), carved upon one of the corbeilles from which the vaulted roof of the apartment sprung. It was a black bull's head, with the legend, “I bide my time ;” and the occasion upon which it was adopted mingled itself singularly and impressively with the subject of his present reflections.

It was said by a constant tradition, that a Malisius de Ravenswood had in the thirteenth century, been deprived of his castle and lands by a powerful usurper, who for a while enjoyed his spoils in quiet. At length, on the eve of a costly banquet, Ravenswood, who had watched his opportunity, introduced himself into the castle with a small band of faithful retainers. The serving of the expected feast was impatiently looked for by the guests, and clamorously demanded by the temporary master of the castle. Ravenswood, who had assumed the disguise of a sewer upon the occasion, answered, in

stern voice, "I bide my time;" and at the same moment a bull's head, the ancient symbol of death, was placed upon the table. The explosion of the conspiracy took place upon the signal, and the usurper and his followers were put to death. Perhaps there was something in this still known and often repeated story, which came immediately home to the breast and conscience of the Lord Keeper; for, putting from him the paper on which he had begun his report, and carefully locking the memoranda which he had prepared into a cabinet which stood beside him, he proceeded to walk abroad, as if for the purpose of collecting his ideas, and reflecting further on the consequences of the step which he was about to take, ere yet they became inevitable.

In passing through a large Gothic anteroom, Sir William Ashton heard the sound of his daughter's lute. Music, when the performers are concealed, affects us with a pleasure mingled with surprise, and reminds us of the natural concert of birds among the leafy bowers. The statesman, though little accustomed to give way to emotions of this natural and simple class, was still a man and a father. He stopped, therefore, and listened, while the silver tones of Lucy Ashton's voice mingled with the accompaniment in an ancient air, to which some one had adapted the following words:—

"Look not thou on beauty's charming,—
Sit thou still when kings are arming,—
Taste not when the wine-cup glistens,—
Speak not when the people listens,—
Stop thine ear against the singer,—
From the red gold keep thy finger,—
Vacant heart, and hand, and eye,—
Easy live and quiet die."

The sounds ceased, and the Keeper entered his daughter's apartment.

The words she had chosen seemed particularly adapted to her character; for Lucy Ashton's exquisitely beautiful, yet somewhat girlish features, were formed to express peace of mind, serenity and indifference to the tinsel of worldly pleasure. Her locks, which were of shadowy gold, divided on a brow of exquisite whiteness, like a gleam of broken and pallid sunshine upon a hill of snow. The expression of the countenance was in the last degree gentle, soft, timid, and feminine, and seemed rather to shrink from the most casual look of a stranger, than to court his admiration. Something there was of a Madonna cast, perhaps the result of delicate health, and of residence in a

family where the dispositions of the inmates were fiercer, more active, and energetic, than her own.

Yet her passiveness of disposition was by no means owing to an indifferent or unfeeling mind. Left to the impulse of her own taste and feeling, Lucy Ashton was peculiarly accessible to those of a romantic cast. Her secret delight was in the old legendary tales of ardent devotion and unalterable affection, checkered as they so often are with strange adventures and supernatural horrors. This was her favored fairy realm, and here she erected her aerial palaces. But it was only in secret that she labored at this delusive, though delightful architecture. In her retired chamber, or in the woodland bower which she had chosen for her own, and called after her name, she was in fancy distributing the prizes at the tournament, or raining down influence from her eyes on the valiant combatants; or she was wandering in the wilderness with Una, under escort of the generous lion; or she was identifying herself with the simple, yet noble-minded Miranda, in the isle of wonder and enchantment.

But in her exterior relations to things of this world, Lucy willingly received the ruling impulse from those around her. The alternative was, in general, too indifferent to her to render resistance desirable, and she willingly found a motive for decision in the opinion of her friends, which perhaps she might have sought for in vain in her own choice. Every reader must have observed in some family of his acquaintance some individual of a temper soft and yielding, who, mixed with stronger and more ardent minds, is borne along by the will of others, with as little power of opposition as the flower which is flung into a running stream. It usually happens that such a compliant and easy disposition, which resigns itself without murmur to the guidance of others, becomes the darling of those to whose inclinations its own seemed to be offered, in ungrudging and ready sacrifice.

This was eminently the case with Lucy Ashton. Her politic, wary, and worldly father, felt for her an affection, the strength of which sometimes surprised him into an unusual emotion. Her elder brother, who trode the path of ambition with a haughtier step than his father, had also more of human affection. A soldier, and in a dissolute age, he preferred his sister Lucy even to pleasure, and to military preferment and distinction. Her younger brother, at an age when trifles chiefly occupied his mind, made her the confidant of all his pleasures and anxieties, his success in field-sports, and his quarrels with his tutor and instructors. To these details, however trivial, Lucy lent patient and not indifferent attention. They moved and interested Henry, and that was enough to secure her ear.

Her mother alone did not feel that distinguished and pre-dominating affection, with which the rest of the family cherished Lucy. She regarded what she termed her daughter's want of spirit, as a decided mark, that the more plebeian blood of her father predominated in Lucy's veins, and used to call her in derision her Lammermoor Shepherdess. To dislike so gentle and inoffensive a being was impossible; but Lady Ashton preferred her eldest son, on whom had descended a large portion of her own ambitious and undaunted disposition, to a daughter whose softness of temper seemed allied to feebleness of mind. Her eldest son was the more partially beloved by his mother, because, contrary to the usual custom of Scottish families of distinction, he had been named after the head of the house.

"My Sholto," she said, "will support the untarnished honor of his maternal house, and elevate and support that of his father. Poor Lucy is unfit for courts or crowded halls. Some country laird must be her husband, rich enough to supply her with every comfort, without an effort on her own part, so that she may have nothing to shed a tear for but the tender apprehension lest he may break his neck in a fox-chase. It was not so, however, that our house was raised, nor is it so that it can be fortified and augmented. The Lord Keeper's dignity is yet new; it must be borne as if we were used to its weight, worthy of it and prompt to assert and maintain it. Before ancient authorities men bend, from customary and hereditary deference; in our presence, they will stand erect, unless they are compelled to prostrate themselves. A daughter fit for the sheep-fold or the cloister, is ill-qualified to exact respect where it is yielded with reluctance; and since Heaven refused us a third boy, Lucy should have held a character fit to supply his place. The hour will be a happy one which disposes her hand in marriage to some one whose energy is greater than her own, or whose ambition is of as low an order."

So meditated a mother, to whom the qualities of her children's hearts, as well as the prospect of their domestic happiness, seemed light in comparison to their rank and temporal greatness. But, like many a parent of hot and impatient character, she was mistaken in estimating the feelings of her daughter, who, under a semblance of extreme indifference, nourished the germ of those passions which sometimes spring up in one night, like the gourd of the prophet, and astonish the observer by their unexpected ardor and intensity. In fact, Lucy's sentiments seemed chill, because nothing had occurred to interest or awaken them. Her life had hitherto flowed on in a uniform and gentle tenor, and happy for her had not its present smoothness of current

resembled that of the stream as it glides downward to the waterfall!

"So, Lucy," said her father, entering as her song was ended, "does your musical philosopher teach you to condemn the world before you know it?—that is surely something premature. Or did you but speak according to the fashion of fair maidens, who are always to hold the pleasures of life in contempt till they are pressed upon them by the address of some gentle knight?"

Lucy blushed, disclaimed any inference respecting her own choice being drawn from her selection of a song, and readily laid aside her instrument at her father's request that she would attend him in his walk.

A large and well-wooded park, or rather chase, stretched along the hill behind the castle, which occupying, as we have noticed, a pass ascending from the plain, seemed built in its very gorge to defend the forest ground which arose behind it in shaggy majesty. Into this romantic region the father and daughter proceeded, arm in arm, by a noble avenue overarched by embowering elms, beneath which groups of the fallow-deer were seen to stray in distant perspective. As they paced slowly on admiring the different points of view, for which Sir William Ashton, notwithstanding the nature of his usual avocations, had considerable taste and feeling, they were overtaken by the forester, or park-keeper, who, intent on silvan sport, was proceeding with his cross-bow over his arm, and a hound led in leash by his boy, into the interior of the wood.

"Going to shoot us a piece of venison, Norman?" said his master, as he returned the woodman's salutation.

"Saul, your honor, and that I am. Will it please you to see the sport?"

"O no," said his lordship, after looking at his daughter, whose color fled at the idea of seeing the deer shot, although, had her father expressed his wish that they should accompany Norman, it was probable she would not even have hinted her reluctance.

The forester shrugged his shoulders. "It was a disheartening thing," he said, "when none of the gentles came down to see the sport. He hoped Captain Sholto would be soon hame, or he might shut up his shop entirely; for Mr. Harry was kept sae close wi' his Latin nonsense, that, though his will was very gude to be in the wood from morning till night, there would be a hopeful lad lost, and no making a man of him. It was not so, he had heard, in Lord Ravenwood's time—when a buck was to be killed, man and mother's son ran to see; and when the deer fell, the knife was always presented to the knight, and

he never gave less than a dollar for the compliment. And there was Edgar Ravenswood—Master of Ravenswood that is now—when he goes up to the wood—there hasna been a better hunter since Tristrem's time—when Sir Edgar hauds out,* down goes the deer, faith. But we hae lost a' sense of wood-craft on this side of the hill."

There was much in this harangue highly displeasing to the Lord Keeper's feelings; he could not help observing that his menial despised him almost avowedly for not possessing that taste for sport, which in those times was deemed the natural and indispensable attribute of a real gentleman. But the master of the game is, in all country houses, a man of great importance, and entitled to use considerable freedom of speech. Sir William, therefore, only smiled and replied, he had something else to think upon to-day than killing deer; meantime, taking out his purse, he gave the ranger a dollar for his encouragement. The fellow received it as the waiter of a fashionable hotel receives double his proper fee from the hands of a country gentleman,—that is, with a smile, at which pleasure at the gift is mingled with contempt for the ignorance of the donor. "Your honor is the bad paymaster," he said, "who pays before it is done. What would you do were I to miss the buck after you have paid me my wood-fee?"

"I suppose," said the Keeper, smiling, "you would hardly guess what I mean were I to tell you of a *condictio indebiti*?"

"Not I, on my saul—I guess it is some law phrase—but sue a beggar, and—your honor knows what follows.—Well, but I will be just with you, and if bow and brach fail not, you shall have a piece of game two fingers fat on the brisket."

As he was about to go off, his master again called him, and asked, as if by accident, whether the Master of Ravenswood was actually so brave a man and so good a shooter as the world spoke him?

"Brave! brave enough, I warrant you," answered Norman; "I was in the wood at Tynninghame, when there was a sort of gallants hunting with my lord: on my saul, there was a buck turned to bay made us all stand back; a stout old Trojan of the first head, ten-tynd branches, and a brow as broad as e'er a bullock's. Egad, he dashed at the old lord, and there would have been inlake among the peerage, if the Master had not whipt roundly in, and hamstrung him with his cutlass. He was but sixteen then, bless his heart!"

"And is he as ready with the gun as with the couteau?" said Sir William.

**Hauds out.* Holds out, *i.e.* presents his piece.

"He'll strike this silver dollar out from beneath my finger and thumb at four score yards, and I'll hold it out for a gold merk ; what more would you have of eye, hand, lead, and gun-powder ?"

"O, no more to be wished, certainly," said the Lord Keeper ; "but we keep you from your sport, Norman. Good-morrow, good Norman."

And humming his rustic roundelay, the yeoman went on his road, the sound of his rough voice gradually dying away as the distance betwixt them increased :—

"The monk must arise when the matins ring,
The abbot may sleep to their chime ;
But the yeomen must start when the bugles sing,
'Tis time, my hearts, 'tis time.

"There's bucks and raes on Bilhope braes,
There's a herd on Shortwood Shaw ;
But a lily-white doe in the garden goes,
She's fairly worth them a'."

"Has this fellow," said the Lord Keeper, when the yeoman's song had died on the wind, "ever served the Ravenswood people, that he seems so much interested in them ? I suppose you know, Lucy, for you make it a point of conscience to record the special history of every boor about the castle."

"I am not quite so faithful a chronicler, my dear father ; but I believe that Norman once served here while a boy, and before he went to Ledington, whence you hired him. But if you want to know anything of the former family, Old Alice is the best authority."

"And what should I have to do with them, pray, Lucy," said her father, "or with their history or accomplishments ?"

"Nay, I do not know, sir ; only that you were asking questions of Norman about young Ravenswood."

"Pshaw, child !"—replied her father, yet immediately added, "and who is old Alice ? I think you know all the old women in the country."

"To be sure I do, or how could I help the old creatures when they are in hard times ? And as to old Alice, she is the very empress of old women, and queen of gossips, so far as legendary lore is concerned. She is blind, poor old soul, but when she speaks to you, you would think she has some way of looking into your very heart. I am sure I often cover my face, or turn it away, for it seems as if she saw one change color, though she has been blind these twenty years. She is worth visiting, were it but to say you have seen a blind and paralytic

old woman have so much acuteness of perception, and dignity of manners. I assure you she might be a countess from her language and behavior.—Come, you must go to see Alice; we are not a quarter of a mile from her cottage.”

“All this, my dear,” said the Lord Keeper, “is no answer to my question, who this woman is, and what is her connection with the former proprietor’s family?”

“O, it was something of a nourice-ship, I believe; and she remained here, because her two grandsons were engaged in your service. But it was against her will I fancy; for the poor old creature is always regretting the change of time and of property.”

“I am much obliged to her,” answered the Lord Keeper. “She and her folk eat my bread, and drink my cup, and are lamenting all the while that they are not still under a family which never could do good, either to themselves or any one else!”

“Indeed,” replied Lucy, “I am certain you do old Alice injustice. She has nothing mercenary about her, and would not accept a penny in charity, if it were to save her from being starved. She is only talkative, like all old folk, when you put them on stories of their youth; and she speaks about the Ravenswood people, because she lived under them so many years. But I am sure she is grateful to you, sir, for your protection, and that she would rather speak to you, than to any other person in the whole world beside. Do, sir, come and see old Alice.”

And, with the freedom of an indulged daughter, she dragged the Lord Keeper in the direction she desired.

CHAPTER THIRD.

Through tops of the high trees she did descry
A little smoke, whose vapor, thin and light,
Reeking aloft, uprolled to the sky,
Which cheerful sign did send unto her sight,
That in the same did wonne some living wight.

SPENSER.

LUCY acted as her father’s guide, for he was too much engrossed with his political labors, or with society, to be perfectly acquainted with his own extensive domains, and, moreover, was generally an inhabitant of the city of Edinburgh; and she, on the other hand, had, with her mother, resided the

whole summer in Ravenswood, and partly from taste, partly from want of any other amusement, had, by her frequent rambles, learnt to know each lane, alley, dingle, or bushy dell,

And every bosky bourn from side to side.

We have said that the Lord Keeper was not indifferent to the beauties of nature ; and we add, in justice to him, that he felt them doubly, when pointed out by the beautiful, simple, and interesting girl, who, hanging on his arm with filial kindness, now called him to admire the size of some ancient oak, and now the unexpected turn, where the path, developing its maze from glen or dingle, suddenly reached an eminence commanding an extensive view of the plains beneath them, and then gradually glided away from the prospect to lose itself among rocks and thickets, and guide to scenes of deeper seclusion.

It was when pausing on one of those points of extensive and commanding view, that Lucy told her father they were close by the cottage of her blind protégée ; and on turning from the little hill, a path which led around it, worn by the daily steps of the infirm inmate, brought them in sight of the hut, which, embosomed in a deep and obscure dell, seemed to have been so situated purposely to bear a correspondence with the darkened state of its inhabitant.

The cottage was situated immediately under a tall rock, which in some measure beetled over it, as if threatening to drop some detached fragment from its brow on the frail tenement beneath. The hut itself was constructed of turf and stones, and rudely roofed over with thatch, much of which was in a dilapidated condition. The thin blue smoke rose from it in a light column, and curled upward along the white face of the incumbent rock, giving the scene a tint of exquisite softness. In a small and rude garden, surrounded by straggling elder-bushes, which formed a sort of imperfect hedge, sat, near to the beehives, by the produce of which she lived, that "woman old," whom Lucy had brought her father hither to visit.

Whatever there had been which was disastrous in her fortune—whatever there was miserable in her dwelling, it was easy to judge, by the first glance, that neither years, poverty, misfortune, nor infirmity, had broken the spirit of this remarkable woman.

She occupied a turf-seat placed under a weeping birch of unusual magnitude and age, as Judah is represented sitting under her palm-tree, with an air at once of majesty and of dejection. Her figure was tall, commanding, and but little bent by

the infirmities of old age. Her dress, though that of a peasant, was uncommonly clean, forming in that particular a strong contrast to most of her rank, and was disposed with an attention to neatness and even to taste, equally unusual. But it was her expression of countenance which chiefly struck the spectator, and induced most persons to address her with a degree of deference and civility very inconsistent with the miserable state of her dwelling, and which, nevertheless, she received with that easy composure which showed she felt it to be her due. She had once been beautiful, but her beauty had been of a bold and masculine cast, such as does not survive the bloom of youth; yet her features continued to express strong sense, deep reflection, and a character of sober pride, which, as we have already said of her dress, appeared to argue a conscious superiority to those of her own rank. It scarce seemed possible that a face, deprived of the advantage of sight, could have expressed character so strongly; but her eyes, which were almost totally closed, did not, by the display of their sightless orbs, mar the countenance to which they could add nothing. She seemed in a ruminating posture, soothed, perhaps, by the murmurs of the busy tribe around her, to abstraction, though not to slumber.

Lucy undid the latch of the little garden gate, and solicited the old woman's attention. "My father, Alice, is come to see you."

"He is welcome, Miss Ashton, and so are you," said the old woman, turning and inclining her head toward her visitors.

"This is a fine morning for your bee-hives, mother," said the Lord Keeper, who, struck with the outward appearance of Alice, was somewhat curious to know if her conversation would correspond with it.

"I believe so, my lord," she replied; "I feel the air breathe milder than of late."

"You do not," resumed the statesman, "take charge of these bees yourself, mother?—How do you manage them?"—

"By delegates, as kings do their subjects," resumed Alice, "and I am fortunate in a prime minister—Here, Babie."

She whistled on a small silver call which hung around her neck, and which at that time was sometimes used to summon domestics, and Babie, a girl of fifteen, made her appearance from the hut, not altogether so cleanly arrayed as she would probably have been had Alice had the use of her eyes, but with a greater air of neatness than was upon the whole to have been expected.

"Babie," said her mistress, "offer some bread and honey

to the Lord Keeper and Miss Ashton—they will excuse your awkwardness if you use cleanliness and despatch.”

Babie performed her mistress's command with the grace which was naturally to have been expected, moving to and fro with a lobster-like gesture, her feet and legs tending one way, while her head, turned in a different direction, was fixed in wonder upon the laird, who was more frequently heard of than seen by his tenants and dependants. The bread and honey, however, deposited on a plantain leaf, was offered and accepted in all due courtesy. The Lord Keeper, still retaining the place which he had occupied on the decayed trunk of a fallen tree, looked as if he wished to prolong the interview, but was at a loss how to introduce a suitable subject.

“You have been long a resident on this property?” he said, after a pause.

“It is now nearly sixty years since I first knew Ravenswood,” answered the old dame, whose conversation, though perfectly civil and respectful, seemed cautiously limited to the unavoidable and necessary task of replying to Sir William.

“You are not, I should judge by your accent, of this country originally?” said the Lord Keeper, in continuation.

“No; I am by birth an Englishwoman.”

“Yet you seem attached to this country as if it were your own.”

“It is here,” replied the blind woman, “that I have drunk the cup of joy and of sorrow which Heaven destined for me. I was here the wife of an upright and affectionate husband for more than twenty years—I was here the mother of six promising children—it was here that God deprived me of all these blessings—it was here they died, and yonder, by yon ruined chapel, they lie all buried—I had no country but theirs while they lived—I have none but theirs now they are no more.”

“But your house,” said the Lord Keeper, looking at it, “is miserably ruinous?”

“Do, my dear father,” said Lucy, eagerly, yet bashfully, catching at the hint, “give orders to make it better,—that is, if you think it proper.”

“It will last my time, my dear Miss Lucy,” said the blind woman; “I would not have my lord give himself the least trouble about it.”

“But,” said Lucy, “you once had a much better house, and were rich, and now in your old age to live in this hovel!”

“It is as good as I deserve, Miss Lucy; if my heart has not broke with what I have suffered, and seen others suffer, it

must have been strong enough, and the rest of this old frame has no right to call itself weaker."

"You have probably witnessed many changes," said the Lord Keeper; "but your experience must have taught you to expect them."

"It has taught me to endure them, my lord," was the reply.

"Yet you knew that they must needs arrive in the course of years?" said the statesman.

"Ay; as I know that the stump, on or beside which you sit, once a tall and lofty tree, must needs one day fall by decay, or by the axe; yet I hoped my eyes might not witness the downfall of the tree which overshadowed my dwelling."

"Do not suppose," said the Lord Keeper, "that you will lose any interest with me, for looking back with regret to the days when another family possessed my estates. You had reason, doubtless, to love them, and I respect your gratitude. I will order some repairs in your cottage, and I hope we shall live to be friends when we know each other better."

"Those of my age," returned the dame, "make no new friends. I thank you for your bounty—it is well intended, undoubtedly; but I have all I want, and I cannot accept more at your lordship's hands."

"Well, then," continued the Lord Keeper, "at least allow me to say, that I look upon you as a woman of sense and education beyond your appearance, and that I hope you will continue to reside on this property of mine rent-free for your life."

"I hope I shall," said the old dame, composedly; "I believe that was made an article in the sale of Ravenswood to your lordship, though such a trifling circumstance may have escaped your recollection."

"I remember—I recollect," said his lordship, somewhat confused. "I perceive you are too much attached to your old friends to accept any benefit from their successor."

"Far from it, my lord; I am grateful for the benefits which I decline, and I wish I could pay you for offering them better than what I am now about to say." The Lord Keeper looked at her in some surprise, but said not a word. "My Lord," she continued, in an impressive and solemn tone, "take care what you do; you are on the brink of a precipice."

"Indeed?" said the Lord Keeper, his mind reverting to the political circumstances of the country. "Has anything come to your knowledge—any plot or conspiracy?"

"No, my lord; those who traffic in such commodities do not call in to their councils the old, blind, and infirm. My warning is

of another kind. You have driven matters hard with the house of Ravenswood. Believe a true tale—they are a fierce house, and there is danger in dealing with men when they become desperate.”

“Tush!” answered the Keeper; “what has been between us has been the work of the law, not my doing; and to the law they must look, if they would impugn my proceedings.”

“Ay, but they may think otherwise, and take the law into their own hands, when they fail of other means of redress.”

“What mean you?” said the Lord Keeper. “Young Ravenswood would not have recourse to personal violence?”

“God forbid I should say so! I know nothing of the youth but what is honorable and open—honorable and open, said I?—I should have added, free, generous, noble. But he is still a Ravenswood, and may bide his time. Remember the fate of Sir George Lockhart.” *

The Lord Keeper started as she called to his recollection a tragedy so deep and so recent. The old woman proceeded: “Chiesley, who did the deed, was a relative of Lord Ravenswood. In the hall of Ravenswood, in my presence, and in that of others, he avowed publicly his determination to do the cruelty which he afterward committed. I could not keep silence, though to speak it ill became my station. ‘You are devising a dreadful crime,’ I said, ‘for which you must reckon before the judgment-seat.’ Never shall I forget his look, as he replied, ‘I must reckon then for many things, and will reckon for this also.’ Therefore I may well say, beware of pressing a desperate man with the hand of authority. There is blood of Chiesley in the veins of Ravenswood, and one drop of it were enough to fire him in the circumstances in which he is placed—I say, beware of him.”

The old dame had, either intentionally or by accident, harped aright the fear of the Lord Keeper. The desperate and dark resource of private assassination, so familiar to a Scottish baron in former times, had even in the present age been too frequently resorted to under the pressure of unusual temptation, or where the mind of the actor was prepared for such a crime. Sir William Ashton was aware of this; as also that young Ravenswood had received injuries sufficient to prompt him to that sort of revenge, which becomes a frequent though fearful consequence of the partial administration of justice. He endeavored to disguise from Alice the nature of the apprehensions which he entertained; but so ineffectually, that a person even of less penetration than nature had endowed her with must necessarily have been

* Note C. Sir George Lockhart.

aware that the subject lay near his bosom. His voice was changed in its accent as he replied to her, that the Master of Ravenswood was a man of honor; and were it otherwise, that the fate of Chiesley of Dalry was a sufficient warning to any who should dare to assume the office of avenger of his own imaginary wrongs. And having hastily uttered these expressions, he rose and left the place without waiting for a reply.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

—— Is she a Capulet?
 O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.
 SHAKESPEARE.

THE Lord Keeper walked for nearly a quarter of a mile in profound silence. His daughter, naturally timid, and bred up in those ideas of filial awe and implicit obedience which were inculcated upon the youth of that period, did not venture to interrupt his meditations.

"Why do you look so pale, Lucy?" said her father, turning suddenly round and breaking silence.

According to the ideas of the time, which did not permit a young woman to offer her sentiments on any subject of importance unless especially required to do so, Lucy was bound to appear ignorant of the meaning of all that had passed betwixt Alice and her father, and imputed the emotion he had observed to the fear of the wild cattle which grazed in that part of the extensive chase through which they were now walking.

Of these animals, the descendants of the savage herds which anciently roamed free in the Caledonian forests, it was formerly a point of state to preserve a few in the parks of the Scottish nobility. Specimens continued within the memory of man to be kept at least at three houses of distinction, namely, Hamilton, Drumlanrig, and Cumbernauld. They had degenerated from the ancient race in size and strength, if we are to judge from the accounts of old chronicles, and from the formidable remains frequently discovered in bogs and morasses when drained and laid open. The bull had lost the shaggy honors of his mane, and the race was small and light made, in color a dingy white, or rather a pale yellow, with black horns and hoofs. They retained, however, in some measure, the ferocity of their ancestry, could not be domesticated on account of their antipathy to the human race, and were often dangerous if approached unguardedly, or wantonly disturbed.

It was this last reason which has occasioned their being extirpated at the places we have mentioned, where probably they would otherwise have been retained as appropriate inhabitants of a Scottish woodland, and fit tenants for a baronial forest. A few if I mistake not, are still preserved at Chillingham Castle, in Northumberland, the seat of the Earl of Tankerville.

It was to her finding herself in the vicinity of a group of three or four of these animals, that Lucy thought proper to impute those signs of fear which had arisen in her countenance for a different reason. For she had been familiarized with the appearance of the wild cattle, during her walks in the chase; and it was not then, as it may be now, a necessary part of a young lady's demeanor to indulge in causeless tremors of the nerves. On the present occasion, however, she speedily found cause for real terror.

Lucy had scarcely replied to her father in the words we have mentioned, and he was just about to rebuke her supposed timidity, when a bull, stimulated either by the scarlet color of Miss Ashton's mantle, or by one of those fits of capricious ferocity to which their dispositions are liable, detached himself suddenly from the group which was feeding at the upper extremity of a grassy glade, that seemed to lose itself among the crossing and entangled boughs. The animal approached the intruders on his pasture ground, at first slowly, pawing the ground with his hoof, bellowing from time to time, and tearing up the sand with his horns, as if to lash himself up to rage and violence.

The Lord Keeper, who observed the animal's demeanor, was aware that he was about to become mischievous, and, drawing his daughter's arm under his own, began to walk fast along the avenue, in hopes to get out of his sight and his reach. This was the most injudicious course he could have adopted, for, encouraged by the appearance of flight, the bull began to pursue them at full speed. Assailed by a danger so imminent, firmer courage than that of the Lord Keeper might have given way. But paternal tenderness, "love strong as death," sustained him. He continued to support and drag onward his daughter, until, her fears altogether depriving her of the power of flight, she sunk down by his side; and when he could no longer assist her to escape, he turned round and placed himself betwixt her and the raging animal, which advancing in full career, its brutal fury enhanced by the rapidity of the pursuit, was now within a few yards of them. The Lord Keeper had no weapons; his age and gravity dispensed even with the usual

appendage of a walking sword,—could such appendage have availed him anything.

It seemed inevitable that the father or daughter, or both, should have fallen victims to the impending danger, when a shot from a neighboring thicket arrested the progress of the animal. He was so truly struck between the junction of the spine with the skull, that the wound, which in any other part of his body might scarce have impeded his career, proved instantly fatal. Stumbling forward with a hideous bellow, the progressive force of his previous motion, rather than any operation of his limbs, carried him up to within three yards of the astonished Lord Keeper, where he rolled on the ground, his limbs darkened with the black death-sweat, and quivering with the last convulsions of muscular motion.

Lucy lay senseless on the ground, insensible of the wonderful deliverance which she had experienced. Her father was almost equally stupefied, so rapid and unexpected had been the transition from the horrid death which seemed inevitable, to perfect security. He gazed on the animal, terrible even in death, with a species of mute and confused astonishment, which did not permit him distinctly to understand what had taken place; and so inaccurate was his consciousness of what had passed, he might have supposed the bull to have been arrested in its career by a thunderbolt, had he not observed among the branches of the thicket the figure of a man, with a short gun or musketoon in his hand.

This instantly recalled him to a sense of their situation—glance at his daughter reminded him of the necessity of procuring her assistance. He called to the man, whom he concluded to be one of his foresters, to give immediate attention to Miss Ashton, while he himself hastened to call assistance. The huntsman approached them accordingly, and the Lord Keeper saw he was a stranger, but was too much agitated to make any further remarks. In a few hurried words, he directed the shooter, as stronger and more active than himself, to carry the young lady to a neighboring fountain, while he went back to Alice's hut to procure more aid.

The man to whose timely interference they had been so much indebted, did not seem inclined to leave his good work half finished. He raised Lucy from the ground in his arms, and conveying her through the glades of the forest by paths with which he seemed well acquainted, stopped not until he laid her in safety by the side of a plentiful and pellucid fountain, which had been once covered in, screened and decorated with architectural ornaments of a Gothic character. But now the

vault which had covered it being broken down and riven, and the Gothic font ruined and demolished, the stream burst forth from the recess of the earth in open day, and winded its way among the broken sculpture and moss-grown stones which lay in confusion around its source.

Tradition, always busy, at least in Scotland, to grace with a legendary tale a spot in itself interesting, had ascribed a cause of peculiar veneration to this fountain. A beautiful young lady met one of the Lords of Ravenswood while hunting near this spot, and like a second Egeria, had captivated the affections of the feudal Numa. They met frequently afterwards, and always at sunset, the charms of the nymph's mind completing the conquest which her beauty had begun, and the mystery of the intrigue adding zest to both. She always appeared and disappeared close by the fountain, with which, therefore her lover judged she had some inexplicable connection. She placed certain restrictions on their intercourse, which also savored of mystery. They met only once a week—Friday was the appointed day—and she explained to the Lord of Ravenswood, that they were under the necessity of separating so soon as the bell of a chapel, belonging to a hermitage in the adjoining wood, now long ruinous, should toll the hour of vespers. In the course of his confession, the Baron of Ravenswood intrusted the hermit with the secret of his singular amour, and Father Zachary drew the necessary and obvious consequence, that his patron was enveloped in the toils of Satan, and in danger of destruction both to body and soul. He urged these perils to the Baron with all the force of monkish rhetoric, and described, in the most frightful colors, the real character and person of the apparently lovely Naiad, whom he hesitated not to denounce as a limb of the kingdom of darkness. The lover listened with obstinate incredulity ; and it was not until worn out by the obstinacy of the anchoret, that he consented to put the state and condition of his mistress to a certain trial, and for that purpose acquiesced in Zachary's proposal, that on their next interview the vespers' bell should be rung half-an-hour later than usual. The hermit maintained, and bucklered his opinion by quotations from *Malleus Maleficarum*, *Sprengerus*, *Remigius*,* and other learned demonologists, that the Evil One, thus seduced to remain behind the appointed hour, would assume her true shape, and having appeared to her terrified lover as a fiend of hell, would vanish from him in a flash of sulphurous lightning. Raymond of Ravenswood acquiesced in the experiment, not incurious

* [See the Author's *Letters on Demonology*.]

concerning the issue, though confident it would disappoint the expectations of the hermit.

At the appointed hour the lovers met, and their interview was protracted beyond that at which they usually parted, by the delay of the priest to ring his usual curfew. No change took place upon the nymph's outward form; but as soon as the lengthening shadows made her aware that the usual hour of the vespers' chime was past, she tore herself from her lover's arms with a shriek of despair, bid him adieu forever, and plunging into the fountain, disappeared from his eyes. The bubbles occasioned by her descent were crimsoned with blood as they arose, leaving the distracted Baron to infer that his ill-judged curiosity had occasioned the death of this interesting and mysterious being. The remorse which he felt, as well as the recollection of her charms, proved the penance of his future life, which he lost in the battle of Flodden not many months after. But, in memory of his Naiad, he had previously ornamented the fountain in which she appeared to reside, and secured its waters from profanation or pollution, by the small vaulted building of which the fragments still remained scattered around it. From this period the house of Ravenswood was supposed to have dated its decay.

Such was the generally received legend, which some, who would seem wiser than the vulgar, explained, as obscurely intimating the fate of a beautiful maid of plebeian rank, the mistress of this Raymond, whom he slew in a fit of jealousy, and whose blood was mingled with the waters of the locked fountain, as it was commonly called. Others imagined that the tale had a more remote origin in the ancient heathen mythology. All however agreed, that the spot was fatal to the Ravenswood family; and that to drink of the waters of the well, or even approach its brink, was as ominous to a descendant of that house, as for a Grahame to wear green, a Bruce to kill a spider, or a St. Clair to cross the Ord on a Monday.

It was on this ominous spot that Lucy Ashton first drew breath after her long and almost deadly swoon. Beautiful and pale as the fabulous Naiad in the last agony of separation from her lover, she was seated so as to rest with her back against a part of the ruined wall, while her mantle, dripping with the water which her protector had used profusely to recall her senses, clung to her slender and beautifully proportioned form.

The first moment of recollection brought to her mind the danger which had overpowered her senses—the next called to remembrance that of her father. She looked around—he was

nowhere to be seen—"My father—my father!" was all that she could ejaculate.

"Sir William is safe," answered the voice of a stranger—"perfectly safe, and will be with you instantly."

"Are you sure of that?" exclaimed Lucy—"the bull was close by us—do not stop me—I must go to seek my father."

And she arose with that purpose; but her strength was so much exhausted, that, far from possessing the power to execute her purpose, she must have fallen against the stone on which she had leant, probably not without sustaining serious injury.

The stranger was so near to her that, without actually suffering her to fall, he could not avoid catching her in his arms, which, however, he did with a momentary reluctance, very unusual when youth interposes to prevent beauty from danger. It seemed as if her weight, slight as it was, proved too heavy for her young and athletic assistant, for without feeling the temptation of detaining her in his arms ever for a single instant, he again placed her on the stone from which she had risen, and retreating a few steps, repeated hastily, "Sir William Ashton is perfectly safe, and will be here instantly. Do not make yourself anxious on his account—Fate has singularly preserved him. You, madam, are exhausted, and must not think of rising until you have some assistance more suitable than mine."

Lucy, whose senses were by this time more effectually collected, was naturally led to look at the stranger with attention. There was nothing in his appearance which should have rendered him unwilling to offer his arm to a young lady who required support, or which could have induced her to refuse his assistance; and she could not help thinking, even in that moment, that he seemed cold and reluctant to offer it. A shooting-dress of dark cloth intimated the rank of the wearer, though concealed in part by a large and loose cloak of a dark brown color. A Montero cap and a black feather drooped over the wearer's brow, and partly concealed his features, which, so far as seen, were dark, regular, and full of majestic, though somewhat sullen, expression. Some secret sorrow, or the brooding spirit of some moody passion, had quenched the light and ingenuous vivacity of youth in a countenance singularly fitted to display both, and it was not easy to gaze on the stranger without a secret impression either of pity or awe, or at least of doubt and curiosity allied to both.

The impression which we have necessarily been long in describing, Lucy felt in the glance of a moment, and had no sooner encountered the keen black eyes of the stranger, than her own

were bent on the ground with a mixture of bashful embarrassment and fear. Yet there was a necessity to speak, at least she thought so, and in a fluttered accent she began to mention her wonderful escape, in which she was sure that the stranger must, under Heaven, have been her father's protector, and her own.

He seemed to shrink from her expressions of gratitude, while he replied abruptly, "I leave you, madam,"—the deep melody of his voice rendered powerful, but not harsh, by something like a severity of tone—"I leave you to the protection of those to whom it is possible you may have this day been a guardian angel."

Lucy was surprised at the ambiguity of his language, and with a feeling of artless and unaffected gratitude, began to deprecate the idea of having intended to give her deliverer any offence, as if such a thing had been possible. "I have been unfortunate," she said, "in endeavoring to express my thanks—I am sure it must be so, though I cannot recollect what I said—but would you but stay till my father—till the Lord Keeper comes—would you only permit him to pay you his thanks, and to inquire your name."

"My name is unnecessary," answered the stranger; "your father—I would rather say Sir William Ashton—will learn it soon enough, for all the pleasure it is likely to afford him."

"You mistake him," said Lucy, earnestly; "he will be grateful for my sake and for his own. You do not know my father, or you are deceiving me with a story of his safety, when he has already fallen a victim to the fury of that animal."

When she had caught this idea, she started from the ground, and endeavored to press toward the avenue in which the accident had taken place, while the stranger, though he seemed to hesitate between the desire to assist and the wish to leave her, was obliged, in common humanity, to oppose her both by entreaty and action.

"On the word of a gentleman, madam, I tell you the truth: your father is in perfect safety; you will expose yourself to injury if you venture back where the herd of wild cattle grazed.—If you will go"—for, having once adopted the idea that her father was still in danger, she pressed forward in spite of him—"If you *will* go, accept my arm, though I am not perhaps the person who can with most propriety offer you support."

But, without heeding this intimation, Lucy took him at his word. "O, if you be a man," she said,—*"if you be a gentleman, assist me to find my father! You shall not leave me—"*

you must go with me—he is dying perhaps while we are talking here ! ”

Then, without listening to excuse or apology, and holding fast by the stranger's arm, though unconscious of anything save the support which it gave, and without which she could not have moved, mixed with a vague feeling of preventing his escape from her, she was urging, and almost dragging him forward, when Sir William Ashton came up, followed by the female attendant of blind Alice, and by two wood-cutters, whom he had summoned from their occupation to his assistance. His joy at seeing his daughter safe, overcame the surprise with which he would at another time have beheld her hanging as familiarly on the arm of a stranger, as she might have done upon his own.

“ Lucy, my dear Lucy, are you safe?—are you well ? ” were the only words that broke from him as he embraced her in ecstasy.

“ I am well, sir, thank God ! and still more that I see you so ;—but this gentleman,” she said, quitting his arm, and shrinking from him, “ what must he think of me ? ” and her eloquent blood, flushing over neck and brow, spoke how much she was ashamed of the freedom with which she had craved, and even compelled, his assistance.

“ This gentleman,” said Sir William Ashton, “ will, I trust, not regret the trouble we have given him, when I assure him of the gratitude of the Lord Keeper for the greatest service which one man ever rendered to another—for the life of my child—for my own life, which he has saved by his bravery and presence of mind. He will, I am sure, permit us to request ”——

“ Request nothing of ME, my lord,” said the stranger, in a stern and peremptory tone ; “ I am the Master of Ravenswood.”

There was a dead pause of surprise, not unmingled with less pleasant feelings. The Master wrapt himself in his cloak, made a haughty inclination toward Lucy, muttering a few words of courtesy, as indistinctly heard as they seemed to be reluctantly uttered, and, turning from them, was immediately lost in the thicket.

“ The Master of Ravenswood ! ” said the Lord Keeper, when he had recovered his momentary astonishment—“ Hasten after him—stop him—beg him to speak to me for a single moment.”

The two foresters accordingly set off in pursuit of the stranger. They speedily reappeared, and in an embarrassed and awkward manner, said the gentleman would not return. The Lord Keeper took one of the fellows aside, and questioned him more closely what the Master of Ravenswood had said.

"He just said he wadna come back," said the man, with the caution of a prudent Scotsman, who cared not to be the bearer of an unpleasant errand.

"He said something more, sir," said the Lord Keeper, "and I insist on knowing what it was."

"Why, then, my lord," said the man, looking down, "he said—But it wad be nae pleasure to your lordship to hear it, for I dare say the Master meant nae ill."

"That's none of your concern, sir; I desire to hear the very words."

"Weel, then," replied the man, "he said, Tell Sir William Ashton, that the next time he and I foregather, he will not be half sae blithe of our meeting as of our parting."

"Very well, sir," said the Lord Keeper; "I believe he alludes to a wager we have on our hawks—it is a matter of no consequence."

He turned to his daughter, who was by this time so much recovered as to be able to walk home. But the effect which the various recollections, connected with a scene so terrific, made upon a mind which was susceptible in an extreme degree, was more permanent than the injury which her nerves had sustained. Visions of terror, both in sleep and in waking reveries, recalled to her the form of the furious animal, and the dreadful bellow with which he accompanied his career; and it was always the image of the Master of Ravenswood, with his native nobleness of countenance and form, that seemed to interpose betwixt her and assured death. It is, perhaps, at all times dangerous for a young person to suffer recollection to dwell repeatedly, and with too much complacency, on the same individual; but in Lucy's situation it was almost unavoidable. She had never happened to see a young man of mien and features so romantic and so striking as young Ravenswood; but had she seen a hundred his equals or his superiors in those particulars, no one else could have been linked to her heart by the strong associations of remembered danger and escape, of gratitude, wonder, and curiosity. I say curiosity, for it is likely that the singularly restrained and unaccommodating manners of the Master of Ravenswood, so much at variance with the natural expression of his features and grace of his deportment, as they excited wonder by the contrast, had their effect in riveting her attention to the recollection. She knew little of Ravenswood, or the disputes which had existed betwixt her father and his, and perhaps could in her gentleness of mind hardly have comprehended the angry and bitter passions which they had engendered. But she knew that he was come of noble

stem; was poor, though descended from the noble and the wealthy; and she felt that she could sympathize with the feelings of a proud mind, which urged him to recoil from the proffered gratitude of the new proprietors of his father's house and domains. Would he have equally shunned their acknowledgments and avoided their intimacy, had her father's request been urged more mildly, less abruptly, and softened with the grace which women so well know how to throw into their manner, when they mean to mediate betwixt the headlong passions of the ruder sex? This was a perilous question to ask her own mind—perilous both in the idea and in its consequences.

Lucy Ashton, in short, was involved in those mazes of the imagination which are most dangerous to the young and the sensitive. Time, it is true, absence, change of scene and new faces, might probably have destroyed the illusion in her instance as it has done in many others; but her residence remained solitary, and her mind without those means of dissipating her pleasing visions. This solitude was chiefly owing to the absence of Lady Ashton, who was at this time in Edinburgh, watching the progress of some state intrigue; the Lord Keeper only received society out of policy or ostentation, and was by nature rather reserved and unsociable; and thus no cavalier appeared to rival or to obscure the ideal picture of chivalrous excellence which Lucy had pictured to herself in the Master of Ravenswood.

While Lucy indulged in these dreams, she made frequent visits to old blind Alice, hoping it would be easy to lead her to talk on the subject, which at present she had so imprudently admitted to occupy so large a portion of her thoughts. But Alice did not in this particular gratify her wishes and expectations. She spoke readily, and with pathetic feeling, concerning the family in general, but seemed to observe an especial and cautious silence on the subject of the present representative. The little she said of him was not altogether so favorable as Lucy had anticipated. She hinted that he was of a stern and unforgiving character, more ready to resent than to pardon injuries; and Lucy combined with great alarm the hints which she now dropped of these dangerous qualities, with Alice's advice to her father, so emphatically given, "to beware of Ravenswood."

But that very Ravenswood, of whom such unjust suspicions had been entertained, had, almost immediately after they had been uttered, confuted them, by saving at once her father's life and her own. Had he nourished such black revenge as Alice's dark hints seemed to indicate, no deed of active guilt was

necessary to the full gratification of that evil passion. He needed but to have withheld for an instant his indispensable and effective assistance, and the object of his resentment must have perished, without any direct aggression on his part, by a death equally fearful and certain. She conceived, therefore, that some secret prejudice, or the suspicions incident to age and misfortune, had led Alice to form conclusions injurious to the character, and irreconcilable both with the generous conduct and noble features of the Master of Ravenswood. And in this belief Lucy reposed her hope, and went on weaving her enchanted web of fairy-tissue, as beautiful and transient as the film of the gossamer, when it is pearly with the morning dew and glimmering to the sun.

Her father, in the meanwhile, as well as the Master of Ravenswood, were making reflections, as frequent though more solid than those of Lucy, upon the singular event which had taken place. The Lord Keeper's first task, when he returned home, was to ascertain by medical advice that his daughter had sustained no injury from the dangerous and alarming situation in which she had been placed. Satisfied on this topic, he proceeded to revise the memoranda which he had taken down from the mouth of the person employed to interrupt the funeral service of the late Lord Ravenswood. Bred to casuistry, and well accustomed to practice the ambidexter ingenuity of the bar, it cost him little trouble to soften the features of the tumult which he had been at first so anxious to exaggerate. He preached to his colleagues of the Privy Council the necessity of using conciliatory measures with young men, whose blood and temper were hot, and their experience of life limited. He did not hesitate to attribute some censure to the conduct of the officer, as having been unnecessarily irritating.

These were the contents of his public despatches. The letters which he wrote to those private friends into whose management the matter was likely to fall, were of a yet more favorable tenor. He represented that lenity in this case would be equally politic and popular, whereas, considering the high respect with which the rites of interment are regarded in Scotland, any severity exercised against the Master of Ravenswood for protecting those of his father from interruption, would be on all sides most unfavorably construed. And, finally, assuming the language of a generous and high-spirited man, he made it his particular request, that this affair should be passed over without severe notice. He alluded with delicacy to the predicament in which he himself stood with young Ravenswood, as having succeeded in the long train of litigation by which the

fortunes of that noble house had been so much reduced, and confessed it would be most peculiarly acceptable to his feelings could he find means in some sort to counterbalance the disadvantages which he occasioned the family, though only in the prosecution of his just and lawful rights. He therefore made it his particular and personal request that the matter should have no further consequences, and insinuated a desire that he himself should have the merit of having put a stop to it by his favorable report and intercession. It was particularly remarkable, that, contrary to his uniform practice, he made no special communication to Lady Ashton upon the subject of the tumult; and although he mentioned the alarm which Lucy had received from one of the wild cattle, yet he gave no detailed account of an incident so interesting and terrible.

There was much surprise among Sir William Ashton's political friends and colleagues on receiving letters of a tenor so unexpected. On comparing notes together, one smiled, one put up his eyebrows, a third nodded acquiescence in the general wonder, and a fourth asked, if they were sure these were *all* the letters the Lord Keeper had written on the subject. "It runs strangely in my mind, my lords, that none of these advices contain the root of the matter."

But no secret letters of a contrary nature had been received, although the questions seemed to imply the possibility of their existence.

"Well," said an old gray-headed statesman, who had contrived, by shifting and trimming, to maintain his post at the steerage through all the changes of course which the vessel had held for thirty years, "I thought Sir William would hae verified the auld Scottish saying, 'As soon comes the lamb's skin to market as the auld tup's'."

"We must please him after his own fashion," said another, "thoughtit be an unlooked-for one."

"A wilful man maun hae his way," answered the old counsellor.

"The Keeper will rue this before year and day are out," said a third; "the Master of Ravenswood is the lad to wind him a pirn."*

"Why, what would you do, my lords, with the poor young fellow?" said a noble Marquis present; "the Lord Keeper has got all his estates—he has not a cross to bless himself with."

On which the ancient Lord Turntippet replied,

* *Wind him a pirn* (reel), proverbial for preparing a troublesome business for some person,

"If he hasna gear to fine,
He has shins to pine—

And that was our way before the Revolution—*Luitur cum persona, quæ luere non potest cum crumena**—Hegh, my lords, that's gude law Latin."

"I can see no motive," replied the Marquis, "that any noble lord can have for urging this matter further; let the Lord Keeper have the power to deal in it as he pleases."

"Agree, agree—remit to the Lord Keeper, with any other person for fashion's sake—Lord Hirplehooly, who is bed-ridden—one to be a quorum—Make your entry in the minutes, Mr. Clerk—and now, my lords, there is that young scattergood, the Laird of Bucklaw's fine to be disposed upon—I suppose it goes to my Lord Treasurer?"

"Shame be in my meal-poke, then," exclaimed Lord Turn-tippet; "and your hand aye in the nook of it! I had set that down for a by bit between meals for myself."

"To use one of your favorite saws, my lord," replied the Marquis, "you are like the miller's dog, that licks his lips before the bag is untied—the man is not fined yet."

"But that costs but twa skarts of a pen," said Lord Turn-tippet; "and surely there is nae noble lord that will presume to say, that I, who hae complied wi' a' compliances, taen all manner of tests, abjured all that was to be abjured, and sworn a' that was to be sworn, for these thirty years bypast, sticking fast by my duty to the state through good report and bad report, shouldna hae something now and then to synd my mouth wi' after sic drouthy wark? Eh?"

"It would be very unreasonable indeed, my lord," replied the Marquis, "had we either thought that your lordship's drought was quenchable, or observed anything stick in your throat that required waehing down."

And so we close the scene on the Privy Council of that period.

* *i. e.* Let him pay with his person who cannot pay with his purse.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

For this are all these warriors come,
 To hear an idle tale ;
 And o'er our death-accustom'd arms
 Shall silly tears prevail ?

HENRY MACKENZIE.

ON the evening of the day when the Lord Keeper and his daughter were saved from such imminent peril, two strangers were seated in the most private apartment of a small obscure inn, or rather ale-house, called the Tod's Den, about three or four miles from the Castle of Ravenswood, and as far from the ruinous tower of Wolf's Crag, betwixt which two places it was situated.

One of these strangers was about forty years of age, tall, and thin in the flanks, with an aquiline nose, dark penetrating eyes, and a shrewd but sinister cast of countenance. The other was about fifteen years younger, short, stout, ruddy-faced, and red-haired, with an open, resolute, and cheerful eye, to which careless and fearless freedom, and inward daring, gave fire and expression, notwithstanding its light gray color. A stoup of wine (for in those days it was served out from the cask in pewter flagons) was placed on the table, and each had his quaigh or bicker* before him. But there was little appearance of conviviality. With folded arms, and looks of anxious expectation, they eyed each other in silence, each wrapt in his own thoughts, and holding no communication with his neighbor.

At length the younger broke silence by exclaiming, "What the foul fiend can detain the Master so long? he must have miscarried in his enterprise.—Why did you dissuade me from going with him?"

"One man is enough to right his own wrong," said the taller and older personage; "we venture our lives for him in coming thus far on such an errand."

"You are but a craven after all, Craigengelt," answered the younger, "and that's what many folk have thought you before now."

"But what none has dared to tell me," said Craigengelt, lay-

* Drinking cups of different sizes, made out of staves hooped together. The quaigh was used chiefly for drinking wine or brandy: it might hold about a gill, and was often composed of rose wood, and curiously ornamented with silver.

ing his hand on the hilt of his sword ; “ and, but that I hold a hasty man no better than a fool, I would ”—he paused for his companion’s answer.

“ *Would* you ? ” said the other coolly ; “ and why do you not, then ? ”

Craigengelt drew his cutlass an inch or two, and then returned it with violence into the scabbard—“ Because there is a deeper stake to be played for, than the lives of twenty hare brained gowks like you.”

“ You are right there,” said his companion, “ for if it were not that these forfeitures, and that last fine that the old driveler Turntippet is gaping for, and which, I daresay, is laid on by this time, have fairly driven me out of house and home, I were a coxcomb and a cuckoo to boot, to trust your fair promises of getting me a commission in the Irish brigade,—what have I to do with the Irish brigade ? I am a plain Scotsman as my father was before me : and my grand-aunt, Lady Girnington, cannot live forever.”

“ Ay, Bucklaw,” observed Craigengelt, “ but she may live for many a long day ; and for your father, he had land and living, kept himself close from wadsetters and money-lenders, paid each man his due, and lived on his own.”

“ And whose fault is it that I have not done so too ? ” said Bucklaw—“ whose but the devil’s and yours, and such like as you, that have led me to the far end of a fair estate ? and now I shall be obliged, I suppose, to shelter and shift about like yourself—live one week upon a line of secret intelligence from Saint Germain—another upon report of a rising in the Highlands—get my breakfast and morning-draught of sack from old Jacobite ladies, and give them locks of my old wig for the Chevalier’s hair—second my friend in his quarrel till he comes to the field, and then flinch from him lest so important a political agent should perish from the way. All this I must do for bread, besides calling myself a Captain ! ”

“ You think you are making a fine speech now,” said Craigengelt, “ and showing much wit at my expense. Is starving or hanging better than the life I am obliged to lead, because the present fortunes of the king cannot sufficiently support his envoys ? ”

“ Starving is honester, Craigengelt, and hanging is like to be the end on’t—But what you mean to make of this poor fellow Ravenswood I know not—he has no money left, any more than I—his lands are all pawned and pledged, and the interest eats up the rents and is not satisfied, and what do you hope to make by meddling in his affairs ? ”

"Content yourself, Bucklaw; I know my business," replied Craigengelt. "Besides that his name, and his father's services in 1689, will make such an acquisition sound well both at Versailles and Saint Germain's—you will also please be informed, that the Master of Ravenswood is a very different kind of young fellow from you. He has parts and address, as well as courage and talents, and will present himself abroad like a young man of head as well as heart, who knows something more than the speed of a horse or the flight of a hawk. I have lost credit of late, by bringing over no one that had sense to know more than how to unharbor a stag, or take and reclaim an eyess. The Master has education, sense, and penetration."

"And yet is not wise enough to escape the tricks of a kidnapper, Craigengelt!" replied the younger man. "But don't be angry; you know you will not fight, and so it is as well to leave your hilt in peace and quiet, and tell me in sober guise how you drew the Master into your confidence?"

"By flattering his love of vengeance, Bucklaw," answered Craigengelt. "He has always distrusted me, but I watched my time, and struck while his temper was red-hot with the sense of insult and of wrong. He goes now to expostulate, as he says, and perhaps thinks, with Sir William Ashton. I say that if they meet, and the lawyer puts him to his defence, the Master will kill him; for he had that sparkle in his eye which never deceives you when you would read a man's purpose. At any rate, he will give him such a bullying as will be construed into an assault on a privy-councillor; so there will be a total breach betwixt him and government; Scotland will be too hot for him, France will gain him, and we will all set sail together in the French brig *L'Espoir*, which is hovering for us off Eyemouth."

"Content am I," said Bucklaw; "Scotland has little left that I care about; and if carrying the Master with us will get us a better reception in France, why, so be it, a God's name. I doubt our own merits will procure us slender preferment; and I trust he will send a ball through the Keeper's head before he joins us. One or two of these scoundrel statesmen should be shot once a-year, just to keep the others on their good behavior."

"That is very true," replied Craigengelt; and it reminds me that I must go and see that our horses have been fed, and are in readiness; for should such deed be done, it will be no time for grass to grow beneath their heels." He proceeded as far as the door, then turned back with a look of earnestness, and said to Bucklaw, "Whatever should come of this business, I am sure you will do me the justice to remember, that I said

nothing to the Master which could imply my accession to any act of violence which he may take into his head to commit."

"No, no, not a single word like accession," replied Bucklaw; "you know too well the risk belonging to these two terrible words, art and part." Then as if to himself, he recited the following lines:—

"The dial spoke not, but it made shrewd signs,
And pointed full upon the stroke of murder."

"What is that you are talking to yourself?" said Craigen-gelt, turning back with some anxiety.

"Nothing—only two lines I have heard upon the stage," replied his companion.

"Bucklaw," said Craigen-gelt, "I sometimes think you should have been a stage-player yourself; all is fancy and frolic with you."

"I have often thought so myself," said Bucklaw. "I believe it would be safer than acting with you in the Fatal Conspiracy. But away, play your own part, and look after the horses like a groom as you are. A play-actor—a stage-player," he repeated to himself; "that would have deserved a stab, but that Craigen-gelt's a coward—And yet I should like the profession well enough—Stay—let me see—ay—I would come out in Alexander—

"Thus from the grave I rise to save my love,
Draw all your swords, and quick as lightning move;
When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay,
'Tis love commands, and glory leads the way."

As with a voice of thunder, and his hand upon his sword, Bucklaw repeated the ranting couplets of poor Lee, Craigen-gelt re-entered with a face of alarm.

"We are undone, Bucklaw! the Master's led horse has cast himself over his halter in the stable, and is dead lame—his hackney will be set up with the day's work, and now he has no fresh horse; he will never get off."

"Egad, there will be no moving with the speed of lightning this bout," said Bucklaw, dryly. "But stay, you can give him yours."

"What! and be taken myself! I thank you for the proposal," said Craigen-gelt.

"Why," replied Bucklaw, "if the Lord Keeper should have met with a mischance, which for my part I cannot suppose, for the Master is not the lad to shoot an old and unarmed man—

but *if* there should have been a fray at the Castle, you are neither art nor part in it, you know, so have nothing to fear."

"True, true," answered the other, with embarrassment; "but consider my commission from Saint Germain's."

"Which many men think is a commission of your own making, noble captain. Well, if you will not give him your horse, why, d—n it, he must have mine."

"Yours?" said Craigenfelt.

"Ay, mine," repeated Bucklaw; "it shall never be said that I agreed to back a gentleman in a little affair of honor, and neither helped him on with it nor off from it."

"You will give him your horse? and have you considered the loss?"

"Loss! why, Grey Gilbert cost me twenty Jacobuses, that's true; but then his hackney is worth something, and his Black Moor is worth twice as much were he sound, and I know how to handle him. Take a fat sucking mastiff whelp, flay and bowel him, stuff the body full of black and grey snails, roast a reasonable time, and baste with oil of spikenard, saffron, cinnamon and honey, anoint the dripping, working it in"——

"Yes, Bucklaw, but in the meanwhile, before the sprain is cured, nay, before the whelp is roasted, you will be caught and hung. Depend on it, the chase will be hard after Ravenswood. I wish we had made our place of rendezvous nearer to the coast."

"On my faith, then," said Bucklaw, "I had best go off just now, and leave my horse for him—Stay, stay, he comes, I hear a horse's feet."

"Are you sure there is only one?" said Craigenfelt; "I fear there is a chase; I think I hear three or four galloping together—I am sure I hear more horses than one."

"Pooh, pooh, it is the wench of the house clattering to the well in her pattens. By my faith, Captain, you should give up both your captainship and your secret service, for you are as easily scared as a wild goose. But here comes the Master alone, and looking as gloomy as a night in November."

The Master of Ravenswood entered the room accordingly, his cloak muffled around him, his arms folded, his looks stern, and at the same time dejected. He flung his cloak from him as he entered, threw himself upon a chair, and appeared sunk in a profound reverie.

"What has happened? What have you done?" was hastily demanded by Craigenfelt and Bucklaw in the same moment.

"Nothing," was the short and sullen answer.

"Nothing? and left us, determined to call the old villain to account for all the injuries that you, we, and the country have received at his hand? Have you seen him?"

"I have," replied the Master of Ravenswood.

"Seen him? and come away without settling scores which have been so long due?" said Bucklaw; "I would not have expected that at the hand of the Master of Ravenswood."

"No matter what you expected," replied Ravenswood; "it is not to you, sir, that I shall be disposed to render any reason for my conduct."

"Patience, Bucklaw," said Craigenfelt, interrupting his companion, who seemed about to make an angry reply. "The Master has been interrupted in his purpose by some accident; but he must excuse the anxious curiosity of friends, who are devoted to his cause like you and me."

"Friends, Captain Craigenfelt!" retorted Ravenswood, haughtily; "I am ignorant what familiarity has passed betwixt us to entitle you to use that expression. I think our friendship amounts to this, that we agreed to leave Scotland together so soon as I should have visited the alienated mansion of my fathers, and had an interview with its present possessor—I will not call him proprietor."

"Very true, Master," answered Bucklaw; "and as we thought you had a mind to do something to put your neck in jeopardy, Craigie and I very courteously agreed to tarry for you, although ours might run some risk in consequence. As to Craigie, indeed, it does not very much signify, he had gallows written on his brow in the hour of his birth; but I should not like to discredit my parentage by coming to such an end in another man's cause."

"Gentlemen," said the Master of Ravenswood, "I am sorry if I have occasioned you any inconvenience. But I must claim the right of judging what is best for my own affairs, without rendering explanations to any one. I have altered my mind, and do not design to leave the country this season."

"Not to leave the country, Master," exclaimed Craigenfelt. "Not to go over, after all the trouble and expense I have incurred—after all the risk of discovery, and the expense of demurrage!"

"Sir," replied the Master of Ravenswood, "when I designed to leave this country in this haste, I made use of your obliging offer to procure me means of conveyance; but I do not recollect that I pledged myself to go off, if I found occasion to alter my mind. For your trouble on my account, I am sorry, and I thank you; your expense," he added, putting his hand

into his pocket, "admits a more solid compensation—freight and demurrage are matters with which I am unacquainted, Captain Craigengelt; but take my purse, and pay yourself according to your own conscience." And accordingly he tendered a purse with some gold in it to the soi-disant captain.

But here Bucklaw interposed in his turn. "Your fingers, Craigie, seem to itch for that same piece of green net-work," said he; "but I make my vow to God, that if they offer to close upon it I will chop them off with my whinger. Since the Master has changed his mind, I suppose we need stay here no longer; but in the first place I beg leave to tell him"—

"Tell him anything you will," said Craigengelt, "if you will first allow me to state the inconveniences to which he will expose himself by quitting our society, to remind him of the obstacles to his remaining here, and of the difficulties attending his proper introduction at Versailles and Saint Germain's without the countenance of those who have established useful connections."

"Besides forfeiting the friendship," said Bucklaw, "of at least one man of spirit and honor."

"Gentlemen," said Ravenswood, "permit me once more to assure you that you have been pleased to attach to our temporary connection more importance than I ever meant that it should have. When I repair to foreign courts, I shall not need the introduction of an intriguing adventurer, nor is it necessary for me to set value on the friendship of a hot-headed bully." With these words, and without waiting for an answer, he left the apartment, remounted his horse, and was heard to ride off.

"Mortbleu!" said Captain Craigengelt, "my recruit is lost!"

"Ay, Captain," said Bucklaw, "the salmon is off with hook and all. But I will after him, for I have had more of his insolence than I can well digest."

Craigengelt offered to accompany him, but Bucklaw replied, 'No, no, Captain; keep you the cheek of the chimney-nook till I come back; it's good sleeping in a haill skin.

Little kens the auid wife that sits by the fire,
How cauld the wind blaws in hurle-burle swire."

And, singing as he went, he left the apartment.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

Now, Billy Bewick, keep good heart,
And of thy talking let me be ;
But if thou art a man, as I am sure thou art,
Come over the dike and fight with me.
OLD BALLAD.

THE Master of Ravenswood had mounted the ambling hackney which he before rode on finding the accident which had happened to his led horse, and, for the animal's ease was proceeding at a slow pace from the Tod's Den towards his old tower of Wolf's Crag, when he heard the galloping of a horse behind him, and looking back, perceived that he was pursued by young Bucklaw, who had been delayed a few minutes in the pursuit by the irresistible temptation of giving the hostler at the Tod's Den some recipe for treating the lame horse. This brief delay he had made up by hard galloping, and now overtook the Master where the road traversed a waste moor. "Halt, sir!" cried Bucklaw; "I am no political agent—no Captain Craigengelt, whose life is too important to be hazarded in defence of his honor. I am Frank Hayston of Bucklaw, and no man injures me by word, deed, sign, or look, but he must render me an account of it."

"This is all very well, Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw," replied the Master of Ravenswood, in a tone the most calm and indifferent; "but I have no quarrel with you, and desire to have none. Our roads homeward, as well as our roads through life, lie in different directions; there is no occasion for us crossing each other."

"Is there not?" said Bucklaw, impetuously. "By Heaven! but I say that there is though—you call us intriguing adventurers."

"Be correct in your recollection, Mr. Hayston; it was to your companion only I applied that epithet, and you know him to be no better."

And what then? He was my companion for the time, and no man shall insult my companion, right or wrong, while he is in my company."

"Then Mr. Hayston," replied Ravenswood, with the same composure, "you should choose your society better, or you are like to have much work in your capacity of their champion. Go home sir, sleep, and have more reason in your wrath to-morrow."

"Not so, Master, you have mistaken your man ; high airs and wise saws shall not carry it off thus. Besides, you termed me bully, and you shall retract the word before we part."

"Faith, scarcely," said Ravenswood, "unless you show me better reason for thinking myself mistaken than you are now producing."

"Then, Master," said Bucklaw, "though I should be sorry to offer it to a man of your quality, if you will not justify your incivility, or retract it, or name a place of meeting, you must here undergo the hard word and the hard blow."

"Neither will be necessary," said Ravenswood : "I am satisfied with what I have done to avoid an affair with you. If you are serious, this place will serve as well as another."

"Dismount, then, and draw," said Bucklaw, setting him an example. "I always thought and said you were a pretty man ; I should be sorry to report you otherwise."

"You shall have no reason, sir," said Ravenswood, alighting and putting himself into a posture of defence.

Their swords crossed, and the combat commenced with great spirit on the part of Bucklaw, who was well accustomed to affairs of the kind, and distinguished by address and dexterity at his weapon. In the present case, however, he did not use his skill to advantage ; for, having lost temper at the cool and contemptuous manner in which the Master of Ravenswood had long refused, and at length granted him satisfaction, and urged by his impatience, he adopted the part of an assailant with inconsiderate eagerness. The Master, with equal skill, and much greater composure, remained chiefly on the defensive, and even declined to avail himself of one or two advantages afforded him by the eagerness of his adversary. At length in a desperate lunge, which he followed with an attempt to close, Bucklaw's foot slipped, and he fell on the short grassy turf on which they were fighting. "Take your life, sir," said the Master of Ravenswood, "and mend it, if you can."

"It would be but a cobbled piece of work, I fear," said Bucklaw, rising slowly, and gathering up his sword, much less disconcerted with the issue of the combat than could have been expected from the impetuosity of his temper. "I thank you for my life, Master," he pursued. "There is my hand, I bear no ill will to you, either for my bad luck or your better swordmanship."

The Master looked steadily at him for an instant, then extended his hand to him.—"Bucklaw," he said, "you are a generous fellow, and I have done you wrong. I heartily ask your pardon for the expression which offended you ; it was hastily

and incautiously uttered, and I am convinced it is totally misapplied."

"Are you indeed, Master?" said Bucklaw, his face resuming at once its natural expression of light-hearted carelessness and audacity; "that is more than I expected of you; for, Master, men say you are not ready to retract your opinions and your language."

"Not when I have well considered them," said the Master.

"Then you are a little wiser than I am, for I always give my friend satisfaction first and explanation afterward. If one of us falls, all accounts are settled; if not, men are never so ready for peace as after war.—But what does that bawling brat of a boy want?" said Bucklaw. "I wish to Heaven he had come a few minutes sooner! and yet it must have been ended some time and perhaps this way is as well as any other."

As he spoke, the boy he mentioned came up, cudgeling an ass, on which he was mounted, to the top of its speed, and sending, like one of Ossian's heroes, his voice before him,—“Gentlemen,—gentlemen, save yourselves! for the gudewife bade us tell ye there were folk in her house had taen Captain Craigen-gelt, and were seeking for Bucklaw, and that ye behoved to ride for it.”

“By my faith, and that’s very true, my man,” said Bucklaw; “and there’s a silver sixpence for your news, and I would give any man twice as much would tell me which way I should ride.”

“That will I, Bucklaw,” said Ravenswood; “ride home to Wolf’s Crag with me. There are places in the old tower where you might lie hid were a thousand men to seek you.”

“But that will bring you into trouble yourself, Master; and unless you be in the Jacobite scrape already, it is quite needless for me to drag you in.”

“Not a whit; I have nothing to fear.”

“Then I will ride with you blithely, for, to say the truth, I do not know the rendezvous that Craige was to guide us to this night; and I am sure that, if he is taken, he will tell all the truth of me, and twenty lies of you, in order to save himself from the withie.”

They mounted, and rode off in company accordingly, striking off the ordinary road, and holding their way by wild moorish unfrequented paths, with which the gentlemen were well acquainted from the exercise of the chase, but through which others would have had much difficulty in tracing their course. They rode for some time in silence, making such haste as the condition of Ravenswood’s horse permitted, until night having gradually closed around them, they discontinued their speed, both from the diffi-

culty of discovering their path, and from the hope that they were beyond the reach of pursuit or observation.

"And now that we have drawn bridle a bit," said Bucklaw, "I would fain ask you a question, Master."

"Ask, and welcome," said Ravenswood, "but forgive my not answering it, unless I think proper."

"Well, it is simply this," answered his late antagonist,— "What, in the name of old Sathan, could make you, who stand so highly on your reputation, think for a moment of drawing up with such a rogue as Craigengelt, and such a scapegrace as folk call Bucklaw?"

"Simply, because I was desperate, and sought desperate associates."

"And what made you break off from us at the nearest?" again demanded Bucklaw.

"Because I had changed my mind," said the Master, "and renounced my enterprise, at least for the present. And now that I have answered your questions fairly and frankly, tell me what makes you associate with Craigengelt, so much beneath you both in birth and spirit?"

"In plain terms," answered Bucklaw, "because I am a fool, who have gambled away my land in these times. My grandaunt, Lady Girnington, has taen a new tack of life, I think, and I could only hope to get something by a change of government. Craigie was a sort of gambling acquaintance; he saw my condition; and, as the devil is always at one's elbow, told me fifty lies about his credentials from Versailles and his interest at Saint Germain's, promised me a captain's commission at Paris, and I have been ass enough to put my thumb under his belt. I daresay by this time he has told a dozen pretty stories of me to the Government. And this is what I have got by wine, women, and dice, cocks, dogs, and horses."

"Yes, Bucklaw," said the Master, "you have indeed nourished in your bosom the snakes that are now stinging you."

"That's home as well as true, Master," replied his companion; "but, by your leave, you have nursed in your bosom one great goodly snake that has swallowed all the rest, and is as sure to devour you as my half-dozen are to make a meal on all that's left of Bucklaw, which is but what lies between bonnet and boot-heel."

"I must not," answered the Master of Ravenswood, "challenge the freedom of speech in which I have set example. What, to speak without a metaphor, do you call this monstrous passion, which you charge me with fostering?"

"Revenge, my good sir, revenge; which if it be as gentleman-

like a sin as wine and wassail with their *et cæteras*, is equally unchristian, and not so bloodless. It is better breaking a park-pale, to watch a doe or damsel, than to shoot an old man."

"I deny the purpose," said the Master of Ravenswood. "On my soul, I had no such intention; I meant but to confront the oppressor ere I left my native land, and upbraid him with his tyranny and its consequences. I would have stated my wrongs so that they would have shaken his soul within him."

"Yes," answered Bucklaw, "and he would have collared you, and cried help, and then you would have shaken the soul out of him, I suppose. Your very look and manner would have frightened the old man to death."

"Consider the provocation," answered Ravenswood—"consider the ruin and death procured and caused by his hard-hearted cruelty—an ancient house destroyed, an affectionate father murdered! Why, in our old Scottish days, he that sat quiet under such wrongs, would have been held neither fit to back a friend nor face a foe."

"Well, Master, I am glad to see that the devil deals as cunningly with other folk as he deals with me; for whenever I am about to commit any folly, he persuades me it is the most necessary, gallant, gentlemanlike thing on earth, and I am up to saddlegirths in the bog before I see that the ground is soft. And you, Master, might have turned out a murder—a homicide, just out of pure respect for your father's memory."

"There is more sense in your language, Bucklaw," replied the Master. "than might have been expected from your conduct. It is too true, our vices steal upon us in forms outwardly as fair as those of the demons whom the superstitious represent as intriguing with the human race, and are not discovered in their native hideousness until we have clasped them in our arms."

"But we may throw them from us, though," said Bucklaw. "and that is what I shall think of doing one of those days,—that is, when old Lady Girnington dies."

"Did you ever hear the expression of the English divine?" said Ravenswood—"Hell is paved with good intentions"—as much as to say, they are more often formed than executed."

"Well," replied Bucklaw, "but I will begin this blessed night, and have determined not to drink above one quart of wine, unless your claret be of extraordinary quality."

"You will find little to tempt you at Wolf's Crag," said the Master. "I know not that I can promise you more than the shelter of my roof; all, and more than all, our stock of wine and provisions was exhausted at the late occasion."

"Long may it be ere provision is needed for the like pur

pose," answered Bucklaw ; " but you should not drink up the last flask at a dirge ; there is ill luck in that."

" There is ill luck, I think, in whatever belongs to me," said Ravenswood. " But yonder is Wolf's Crag, and whatever it still contains is at your service."

The roar of the sea had long announced their approach to the cliffs, and the summit of which, like the nest of some sea-eagle, the founder of the fortalice had perched his eyry. The pale moon, which had hitherto been contending with flitting clouds, now shone out, and gave them a view of the solitary and naked tower, situated on a projecting cliff that beetled on the German Ocean. On three sides the rock was precipitous ; on the fourth, which was that toward the land, it had been originally fenced by an artificial ditch and drawbridge, but the latter was broken down and ruinous, and the former had been in part filled up, so as to allow passage for a horseman into the narrow courtyard, encircled on two sides with low offices and stables, partly ruinous, and closed on the landward front by a low embattled wall, while the remaining side of the quadrangle was occupied by the tower itself, which, tall and narrow, and built of a grayish stone, stood glimmering in the moonlight, like the sheeted spectre of some huge giant. A wilder or more disconsolate dwelling, it was perhaps difficult to conceive. The sombrous and heavy sound of the billows, successively dashing against the rocky beach at a profound distance beneath, was to the ear what the landscape was to the eye—a symbol of unvaried and monotonous melancholy, not unmingled with horror.*

Although the night was not far advanced, there was no sign of living inhabitant about this forlorn abode, excepting that one, and only one, of the narrow and stancheled windows which appeared at irregular heights and distances in the walls of the building, showed a small glimmer of light.

" There," said Ravenswood, " sits the only male domestic that remains to the house of Ravenswood, and it is well that he does remain there, since otherwise, we had little hope to find either light or fire. But follow me cautiously ; the road is narrow, and admits only one horse in front."

In effect, the path led along a kind of isthmus, at the peninsular extremity of which the tower was situated, with that exclusive attention to strength and security, in preference to every circumstance of convenience, which dictated to the Scot-

* [Wolf's Crag and Fast Castle.—See the Author's explanation in his introduction to *Chronicles of the Canongate*, vol. xix.]

tish barons the choice of their situations, as well as their style of building.

By adopting the cautious mode of approach recommended by the proprietor of this wild hold, they entered the courtyard in safety. But it was long ere the efforts of Ravenswood, though loudly exerted by knocking at the low-browed entrance, and repeated shouts to Caleb to open the gate and admit them, received any answer.

"The old man must be departed," he began to say, "or fallen into some fit; for the noise I have made would have waked the seven sleepers."

At length a timid and hesitating voice replied,—“Master—Master of Ravenswood, is it you?”

“Yes, it is I, Caleb; open the door quickly.”

“But is it you in very blood and body? For I would sooner face fifty deevils as my master’s ghaist, or even his wraith—wherefore, aroint ye, if ye were ten times my master, unless ye come in bodily shape, lith and limb.”

“It is I, you old fool,” answered Ravenswood, “in bodily shape, and alive, save that I am half-dead with cold.”

The light at the upper window disappeared, and glancing from loop-hole to loop-hole in slow succession, gave intimation that the bearer was in the act of descending, with great deliberation, a winding staircase occupying one of the turrets which graced the angles of the old tower. The tardiness of his descent extracted some exclamations of impatience from Ravenswood, and several oaths from his less patient and more mercurial companion. Caleb again paused ere he unbolted the door, and once more asked, if they were men of mould that demanded entrance at this time of night?

“Were I near you, you old fool,” said Bucklaw, “I would give you sufficient proofs of *my* bodily condition.”

“Open the gate, Caleb,” said his master, in a more soothing tone, partly from his regard to the ancient and faithful seneschal, partly perhaps because he thought that angry words would be thrown away, so long as Caleb had a stout iron-clenched oaken door betwixt his person and the speakers.

At length Caleb, with a trembling hand, undid the bars, opened the heavy door, and stood before them, exhibiting his thin gray hairs, bald forehead, and sharp high features, illuminated by a quivering lamp which he held in one hand, while he shaded and protected its flame with the other. The timorous courteous glance which he threw around him—the effect of the partial light upon his white hair and illumined features, might have made a good painting; but our travelers were too impa-

tient for security against the rising storm, to permit them to indulge themselves in studying the picturesque. "Is it you, my dear master? is it you yourself, indeed?" exclaimed the old domestic. "I am wae ye suld hae stude waiting at your ain gate; but wha wad hae thought o' seeing ye sae sune, and a strange gentleman with a—(Here he exclaimed apart, as it were, and to some inmate of the tower, in a voice not meant to be heard by those in the court—Mysie—Mysie, woman; stir for dear life, and get the fire mended; take the auld three-legged stool, or ony thing that's readiest that will make a lowe).—I doubt we are but purily provided, no expecting ye this some months, when doubtless ye wad hae been received conform till your rank, as gude right is; but natheless"—

"Natheless, Caleb," said the Master, "we must have our horses put up, and ourselves too, the best way we can. I hope you are not sorry to see me sooner than you expected?"

"Sorry, my lord!—I am sure ye sall aye be my lord wi' honest folk, as your noble ancestors hae been these three hundred years, and never asked a whig's leave. Sorry to see the Lord of Ravenswood at ane o' his ain castles!—(Then again apart to his unseen associate behind the screen—Mysie, kill the brood-hen without thinking twice on it; let them care that come ahint.)—No to say it's our best dwelling," he added, turning to Bucklaw; "but just a strength for the Lord of Ravenswood to flee until,—that is, not to *flee*, but to retreat until in troublous times, like the present, when it was ill convenient for him to live fruther in the country in ony of his better and mair principal manors; but, for its antiquity, maist folk think that the outside of Wolf's Crag is worthy of a large perusal."

"And you are determined we shall have time to make it," said Ravenswood, somewhat amused with the shifts the old man used to detain them without doors, until his confederate Mysie had made her preparations within.

"O, never mind the outside of the house, my good friend," said Bucklaw; "let's see the inside, and let our horses see the stable, that's all."

"O yes, sir—ay, sir,— unquestionably, sir—my lord and ony of his honorable companions"—

"But our horses, my old friend—our horses; they will be dead-foundered by standing here in the cold after riding hard, and mine is too good to be spoiled; therefore, once more, our horses," exclaimed Bucklaw.

"True—ay—your horses—yes—I will call the grooms;" and sturdily did Caleb roar till the old tower rang again,—
"John—William—Saunders!—The lads are gane out, or sleep

ing" he observed, after pausing for an answer, which he knew that he had no human chance of receiving. "A' gaes wrang when the Master's out by; but I'll take care o' your cattle mysell."

"I think you had better," said Ravenswood, "otherwise I see little chance of their being attended to at all."

"Whisht, my lord,—whisht, for God's sake," said Caleb, in an imploring tone, and apart to his master; "if ye dinna gaird your ain credit, think on mine; we'll hae hard enough wark to mak a decent night o't, wi' a' the lees I can tell."

"Well, well, never mind," said his master; "go to the stable. There is hay and corn, I trust?"

"Ou ay, plenty of hay and corn;" this was uttered boldly and aloud, and, in a lower tone, "there was some half-fous o' aits, and some taitis o' meadow-hay, left after the burial."

"Very well," said Ravenswood, taking the lamp from his domestic's unwilling hand, "I will show the stranger up stairs myself,"

"I canna think o' that, my lord;—if ye wad but have five minutes, or ten minutes, or at maist, a quarter of an hour's patience, and look at the fine moonlight prospect of the Bass* and North Berwick Law till I sort the horses, I would marshal ye up, as reason is ye suld be marshaled, your lordship and your honorable visitor. And I hae lockit up the siller candlesticks, and the lamp is not fit"——

"It will do very well in the meantime," said Ravenswood, "and you will have no difficulty for want of light in the stables, for, if I recollect, half the roof is off."

"Very true, my lord," replied the trusty adherent, and with ready wit instantly added, "and the lazy sclater loons have never come to put it on a' this while, your lordship."

"If I were disposed to jest at the calamities of my house," said Ravenswood, as he led the way up stairs, "poor old Caleb would furnish me with ample means. His passion consists in representing things about our miserable *menage*, not as they are, but as, in his opinion, they ought to be; and, to say the truth, I have been often diverted with the poor wretch's expedients to supply what he thought was essential for the credit of the family, and his still more generous apologies for the want of those articles for which his ingenuity could discover no substitute. But though the tower is none of the largest, I shall have some trouble without him to find the apartment in which there is a fire."

* [A solitary rock off the coast of East Lothian.]

As he spoke thus, he opened the door of the hall. "Here, at least," he said, "there is neither hearth nor harbor."

It was indeed a scene of desolation. A large vaulted room, the beams of which, combined like those of Westminster Hall, were rudely carved at the extremities, remained nearly in the situation in which it had been left after the entertainment at Allan Lord Ravenswood's funeral. Overturned pitchers, and black jacks, and pewter stoups, and flagons, still encumbered the large oaken table; glasses, those more perishable implements of conviviality, many of which had been voluntarily sacrificed by the guests in their enthusiastic pledges to favorite toasts, strewed the stone floor with their fragments. As for the articles of plate lent for the purpose by friends and kinsfolk, those had been carefully withdrawn so soon as the ostentatious display of festivity, equally unnecessary and strangely timed, had been made and ended. Nothing, in short, remained that indicated wealth; all the signs were those of recent wastefulness, and present desolation. The black cloth hangings, which, on the late mournful occasion, replaced the tattered moth-eaten tapestries, had been partly pulled down, and, dangling from the wall in irregular festoons, disclosed the rough stone-work of the building, unsmoothed either by plaster or the chisel. The seats thrown down, or left in disorder, intimated the careless confusion which had concluded the mournful revel. "This room," said Ravenswood, holding up the lamp—"this room, Mr. Hayston, was riotous when it should have been sad; it is a just retribution that it should now be sad when it ought to be cheerful."

They left this disconsolate apartment, and went upstairs, where, after opening one or two doors in vain, Ravenswood led the way into a little matted anteroom, in which, to their great joy, they found a tolerable good fire, which Mysie, by some such expedient as Caleb had suggested, had supplied with a reasonable quantity of fuel. Glad at the heart to see more of comfort than the castle had yet seemed to offer, Bucklaw rubbed his hands heartily over the fire, and now listened with more complacency to the apologies which the Master of Ravenswood offered. "Comfort," he said, "I cannot provide for you, for I have it not for myself; it is long since these walls have known it, if, indeed, they were ever acquainted with it. Shelter and safety, I think, I can promise you."

"Excellent matters, Master," replied Bucklaw, "and with a mouthful of food and wine, positively all I can require to-night."

"I fear," said the Master, "your supper will be a poor one:

I hear the matter in discussion betwixt Caleb and Mysie. Poor Balderston is something deaf, amongst his other accomplishments, so that much of what he means should be spoken aside is overheard by the whole audience, and especially by those from whom he is most anxious to conceal his private manœuvres—Hark !”

They listened, and heard the old domestic’s voice in conversation with Mysie to the following effect. “Just mak the best o’t, mak the best o’t, woman ; it’s easy to put a fair face on ony thing.”

“But the auld brood-hen !—she’ll be as tough as bow-strings and bend leather !”

“Say ye made a mistake—say ye made a mistake, Mysie,” replied the faithful seneschal, in a soothing and undertoned voice ; “tak it a’ on yoursell ; never let the credit o’ the house suffer.”

“But the brood-hen,” remonstrated Mysie,—“ou, she’s sitting some gate aneath the dais in the hall, and I am feared to gae in in the dark for the bogle ; and if I didna see the bogle, I could as ill see the hen, for it’s pit mirk, and there’s no an- other light in the house, save that very blessed lamp whilk the Master has in his ain hand. And if I had the hen, she’s to pu’, and to draw, and to dress ; how can I do that, and them sitting by the only fire we have ?”

“Weel, weel, Mysie,” said the butler, “bide ye there a wee, and I’ll try to get the lamp wiled away frae them.”

Accordingly, Caleb Balderston entered the apartment, little aware that so much of his by-play had been audible there. “Well, Caleb, my old friend, is there any chance of supper ?” said the Master of Ravenswood.

“*Chance* of supper, your lordship ?” said Caleb, with an emphasis of strong scorn at the implied doubt,—“How should there be ony question of that, and us in your lordship’s house ?—Chance of supper, indeed !—But ye’ll no be for butcher meat ? There’s walth o’ f-t poultry, ready either for spit or brander—The fat capon, Mysie !” he added, calling out as boldly as if such a thing had been in existence.

“Quite unnecessary,” said Bucklaw, who deemed himself bound in courtesy to relieve some part of the anxious butler’s perplexity, “if you have anything cold, or a morsel of bread.”

“The best of bannocks !” exclaimed Caleb, much relieved ; “and for cauld meat, a’ that we hae is cauld enough,—howbeit maist of the cauld meat and pastry was gien to the puir folk after the ceremony of interment, as gude reason was ; never- theless”——

"Come, Caleb," said the Master of Ravenswood, "I must cut this matter short. This is the young Laird of Bucklaw; he is under hiding and therefore, you know"—

"He'll be nae nicer than your lordship's honor, I'se warrant," answered Caleb cheerfully, with a nod of intelligence; "I am sorry that the gentleman is under distress, but I am blithe that he canna say muckle again our housekeeping, for I believe his ain pinches may match ours;—no that we are pinched, thank God," he added, retracting the admission which he had made in his first burst of joy, "but nae doubt we are waur aff than we hae been or suld be. And for eating—what signifies telling a lee? there's just the hinder end of the mutton-ham that has been but three times on the table, and the nearer the bane the sweeter, as your honors weel ken; and—there's the heel of the ewe milk kebbuck, wi' a bit of nice butter, and—and—that's a' that's to trust to." And with great alacrity he produced his slender stock of provisions, and placed them with much formality upon a small round table betwixt the two gentlemen, who were not deterred either by the homely quality or limited quantity of the repast from doing it full justice. Caleb in the meanwhile waited on them with grave officiousness, as if anxious to make up, by his own respectful assiduity, for the want of all other attendance.

But, alas! how little on such occasions can form, however anxiously and scrupulously observed, supply the lack of substantial fare! Bucklaw, who had eagerly eaten a considerable portion of the thrice-sacked mutton-ham, now began to demand ale.

"I wadna just presume to recommend our ale," said Caleb; "the maut was ill made, and there was awfu' thunner last week; but siccan water as the Tower well has ye'll seldom see, Bucklaw, and that I'se engage for."

"But if your ale is bad, you can let us have some wine," said Bucklaw, making a grimace at the mention of the pure element which Caleb so earnestly recommended.

"Wine!" answered Caleb undauntedly, "enough of wine; it was but twa days syne—wae's me for the cause—there was as much wine drunk in this house as would have floated a pinnacle. There never was lack of wine at Wolf's Crag."

"Do fetch us some then," said his master, "instead of talking about it." And Caleb boldly departed.

Every expended butt in the old cellar did he set a-tilt, and shake with the desperate expectation of collecting enough of the grounds of claret to fill the large pewter measure which he carried in his hand. Alas! each had been too devoutly drained; and, with all the squeezing and manœuvring which his craft as

a butler suggested, he could only collect about half-a-quart that seemed presentable. Still, however, Caleb was too good a general to renounce the field without a stratagem to cover his retreat. He undauntedly threw down an empty flagon, as if he had stumbled at the entrance of the apartment; called upon Mysie to wipe up the wine that had never been spilt, and placing the other vessel on the table, hoped there was still enough left for their honors. There was indeed; for even Bucklaw, a sworn friend to the grape, found no encouragement to renew his first attack on the vintage of Wolf's Crag, but contented himself, however reluctantly, with a draught of fair water. Arrangements were now made for his repose; and as the secret chamber was assigned for this purpose, it furnished Caleb with a first-rate and most plausible apology for all deficiencies of furniture, bedding, etc.

"For wha," said he, "would have thought of the secret chaumer being needed? it has not been used since the time of the Gowrie Conspiracy, and I durst never let a woman ken of the entrance to it or your honor will allow that it wad not hae been a secret chaumer lang."

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

The hearth in hall was black and dead,
No board was dight in bower within,
Nor merry bowl, nor welcome bed;

"Here's sorry cheer," quoth the Heir of Linne.
OLD BALLAD.

THE feelings of the prodigal Heir of Linne, as expressed in that excellent old song, when, after dissipating his whole fortune, he found himself the deserted inhabitant of "the lonely lodge," might perhaps have some resemblance to those of the Master of Ravenswood in his deserted mansion of Wolf's Crag. The Master, however, had this advantage over the spendthrift in the legend, that if he was in similar distress, he could not impute it to his own imprudence. His misery had been bequeathed to him by his father, and joined to his high blood, and to a title which the courteous might give, or the churlish withhold at their pleasure, it was the whole inheritance he had derived from his ancestry.

Perhaps this melancholy, yet consolatory reflection crossed the mind of the unfortunate young nobleman with a breathing

of comfort. Favorable to calm reflection, as well as to the Muses, the morning, while it dispelled the shades of night, had a composing and sedative effect upon the stormy passions by which the Master of Ravenswood had been agitated on the preceding day. He now felt himself able to analyze the different feelings by which he was agitated, and much resolved to combat and to subdue them. The morning, which had arisen calm and bright, gave a pleasant effect even to the waste moorland view which was seen from the castle on looking to the landward, and the glorious ocean, crisped with a thousand rippling waves of silver, extended on the other side, in awful yet complacent majesty, to the verge of the horizon. With such scenes of calm sublimity the human heart sympathizes even in its most disturbed moods, and deeds of honor and virtue are inspired by their majestic influence.

To seek out Bucklaw in the retreat which he had afforded him was the first occupation of the Master, after he had performed, with a scrutiny unusually severe, the important task of self-examination. "How now, Bucklaw?" was his morning's salutation—"how like you the couch in which the exiled Earl of Angus once slept in security, when he was pursued by the full energy of a king's resentment?"

"Umph!" returned the sleeper awakened; "I have little to complain of where so great a man was quartered before me, only the mattress was of the hardest, the vault somewhat damp, the rats rather more mutinous than I would have expected from the state of Caleb's larder, and if there had been shutters to that grated window, or a curtain to the bed, I should think it, upon the whole, an improvement in your accommodations."

"It is, to be sure, forlorn enough," said the Master, looking around the small vault; "but if you will rise and leave it, Caleb will endeavor to find you a better breakfast than your supper of last night."

"Pray, let it be no better," said Bucklaw, getting up, and endeavoring to dress himself as well as the obscurity of the place would permit—"let it, I say, be no better, if you mean me to persevere in my proposed reformation. The very recollection of Caleb's beverage has done more to suppress my longing to open the day with a morning draught than twenty sermons would have done. And you, Master, have you been able to give battle valiantly to your bosom-snake? You see I am in the way of smothering my vipers one by one."

"I have commenced the battle, at least, Bucklaw, and I have had a fair vision of an angel who descended to my assistance," replied the Master.

"Woe's me!" said his guest, "no vision can I expect, unless my aunt, Lady Girnington, should betake herself to the tomb; and then it would be the substance of her heritage rather than the appearance of her phantom that I should consider as the support of my good resolutions. But this same breakfast, Master,—does the deer that is to make the pastry run yet on foot, as the ballad has it?"

"I will inquire into that matter," said his entertainer, and leaving the apartment, he went in search of Caleb, whom after some difficulty, he found in an obscure sort of dungeon, which had been in former times the buttery of the castle. Here the old man was employed busily in the doubtful task of burnishing a pewter flagon until it should take the hue and semblance of silver-plate. "I think it may do—I think it might pass, if they winna bring it ower muckle in the light o' the window!" were the ejaculations which he muttered from time to time, as if to encourage himself in his undertaking, when he was interrupted by the voice of his master. "Take this," said the Master of Ravenswood, "and get what is necessary for the family." And with these words he gave to the old butler the purse which had on the preceding evening so narrowly escaped the fangs of Craigengelt. The old man shook his silvery and thin locks, and looked with an expression of the most heartfelt anguish at his master as he weighed in his hand the slender treasure, and said in a sorrowful voice, "And is this a' that's left?"

"All that is left at present," said the Master, affecting more cheerfulness than perhaps he really felt, "is just the green purse and the wee pickle gowd, as the old song says; but we shall do better one day, Caleb."

"Before that day comes," said Caleb, "I doubt there will be an end of an auld sang, and an auld serving-man to boot. But it disna become me to speak that gate to your honor, and you looking sae pale. Tak back the purse, and keep it to be making a show before company; for if your honor would just tak a bidding, and be whiles taking it out afore folk and putting it up again, there's naebody would refuse us trust, for a' that's come and gane yet."

"But, Caleb," said the Master, "I still intend to leave this country very soon, and I desire to do so with the reputation of an honest man, leaving no debt behind me, at least of my own contracting."

"And gude right ye suld gang away as a true man, and so ye shall; for auld Caleb can tak the wyte of whatever is taen on for the house, and then it will be a' just ae man's burden; and

I will live just as weel in the tolbooth as out of it, and the credit of the family will be a' safe and sound."

The Master endeavored in vain to make Caleb comprehend that the butler's incurring the responsibility of debts in his own person would rather add to than remove the objections which he had to their being contracted. He spoke to a premier, too busy in devising ways and means to puzzle himself with refuting the arguments offered against their justice or expediency.

"There's Eppie Sma'trash will trust us for ale," said Caleb to himself; "she has lived a' her life under the family—and maybe wi' a soup brandy—I canna say for wine—she is but a lone woman, and gets her claret by a runlet at a time—but I'll work a wee drap out o' her by fair means or foul. For doos, there's the doocot—there will be poultry amang the tenants, though Luckie Chirnside says she has paid the kain twice ower. We'll mak shift an it like your honor—we'll mak shift—keep your heart abune, for the house sall haud its credit as lang as auld Caleb is to the fore."

The entertainment which the old man's exertions of various kinds enabled him to present to the young gentlemen for three or four days was certainly of no splendid description, but it may readily be believed it was set before no critical guests; and even the distresses, excuses, evasions, and shifts of Caleb afforded amusement to the young men, and added a sort of interest to the scrambling and irregular style of their table. They had indeed occasion to seize on every circumstance that might serve to diversify or enliven time, which otherwise passed away so heavily.

Bucklaw, shut out from his usual field-sports and joyous carouses by the necessity of remaining concealed within the walls of the castle, became a joyless and uninteresting companion. When the Master of Ravenwood would no longer fence or play at shovel-board—when he himself had polished to the extremity the coat of his palfrey, with brush, currycomb, and hair-cloth—when he had seen him eat his provender, and gently lie down in his stall, he could hardly help envying the animal's apparent acquiescence in a life so monotonous. "The stupid brute," he said, "thinks neither of the race-ground nor the hunting-field, of his green paddock at Bucklaw, but enjoys himself as comfortably when haltered to the rack in this ruinous vault, as if he had been foaled in it; and I, who have the freedom of a prisoner at large, to range through the dungeons of this wretched old tower, can hardly, betwixt whistling and sleeping, contrive to pass away the hour till dinner-time."

And with this disconsolate reflection, he wended his way to

the bartisan or battlements of the tower, to watch what objects might appear on the distant moor, or to pelt, with pebbles and pieces of lime, the sea-mews and cormorants which established themselves incautiously within the reach of an idle young man.

Ravenswood, with a mind incalculably deeper and more powerful than that of his companion, had his own anxious subjects of reflection, which wrought for him the same unhappiness that sheer ennui and want of occupation inflicted on his companion. The first sight of Lucy Ashton had been less impressive than her image proved to be upon reflection. As the depth and violence of that revengeful passion by which he had been actuated in seeking an interview with the father, began to abate by degrees, he looked back on his conduct toward the daughter as harsh and unworthy toward a female of rank and beauty. Her looks of grateful acknowledgment, her words of affectionate courtesy, had been repelled with something which approached to disdain; and if the Master of Ravenswood had sustained wrongs at the hand of Sir William Ashton, his conscience told him they had been unhandsomely resented toward his daughter. When his thoughts took this turn of self-reproach, the recollection of Lucy Ashton's beautiful features, rendered yet more interesting by the circumstances in which their meeting had taken place, made an impression upon his mind at once soothing and painful. The sweetness of her voice, the delicacy of her expressions, the vivid glow of her filial affection, embittered his regret at having repulsed her gratitude with rudeness, while, at the same time, they placed before his imagination a picture of the most seducing sweetness.

Even young Ravenswood's strength of moral feeling and rectitude of purpose at once increased the danger of cherishing these recollections, and the propensity to entertain them. Firmly resolved as he was to subdue, if possible, the predominating vice in his character, he admitted with willingness—nay, he summoned up in his imagination, the ideas by which it could be most powerfully counteracted; and, while he did so, a sense of his own harsh conduct toward the daughter of his enemy naturally induced him, as if by way of recompense, to invest her with more of grace and beauty than perhaps she could actually claim.

Had any one at this period told the Master of Ravenswood that he had so lately vowed vengeance against the whole lineage of him whom he considered, not unjustly, as author of his father's ruin and death, he might at first have repelled the charge as a foul calumny; yet, upon serious self-examination he would have been compelled to admit, that it had, at one period, some foundation in truth, though, according to the present tone of

his sentiments, it was difficult to believe that this had really been the case.

There already existed in his bosom two contradictory passions—a desire to revenge the death of his father, strangely qualified by admiration of his enemy's daughter. Against the former feeling he had struggled, until it seemed to him upon the wane; against the latter he used no means of resistance, for he did not suspect its existence. That this was actually the case, was chiefly evinced by his resuming his resolution to leave Scotland. Yet, though such was his purpose, he remained day after day at Wolf's Crag, without taking measures for carrying it into execution. It is true that he had written to one or two kinsmen, who resided in a distant quarter of Scotland, and particularly to the Marquis of A—, intimating his purpose; and when pressed upon the subject by Bucklaw, he was wont to allege the necessity of waiting for their reply, especially that of the Marquis, before taking so decisive a measure.

The Marquis was rich and powerful; and although he was suspected to entertain sentiments unfavorable to the government established at the Revolution, he had nevertheless address enough to head a party in the Scottish Privy Council, connected with the high church faction in England, and powerful enough to menace those to whom the Lord Keeper adhered, with a probable subversion of their power. The consulting with a personage of such importance was a plausible excuse, which Ravenswood used to Bucklaw, and probably to himself, for continuing his residence at Wolf's Crag; and it was rendered yet more so by a general report which began to be current, of a probable change of ministers and measures in the Scottish administration. These rumors, strongly asserted by some, and as resolutely denied by others, as their wishes or interest dictated, found their way even to the ruinous Tower of Wolf's Crag, chiefly through the medium of Caleb the butler, who, among his other excellences, was an ardent politician, and seldom made an excursion from the old fortress to the neighboring village of Wolf's Hope, without bringing back what tidings were current in the vicinity.

But if Bucklaw could not offer any satisfactory objections to the delay of the Master in leaving Scotland, he did not the less suffer with impatience the state of inaction to which it confined him; and it was only the ascendancy which his new companion had acquired over him, that induced him to submit to a course of life so alien to his habits and inclinations.

"You were wont to be thought a stirring active young fellow. Master," was his frequent remonstrance; "yet here you seem

determined to live on and on like a rat in a hole, with this trifling difference, that the wiser vermin chooses a hermitage where he can find food at least ; but as for us, Caleb's excuses become longer as his diet turns more spare, and I fear we shall realize the stories they tell of the sloth,—we have almost eat up the last green leaf on the plant, and have nothing left for it but to drop from the tree and break our necks."

"Do not fear," said Ravenswood ; "there is a fate watches for us, and we too have a stake in the revolution that is now impending, and which already has alarmed many a bosom

"What fate—what revolution ? " inquired his companion. "We have had one revolution too much already, I think."

Ravenswood interrupted him by putting into his hands a letter.

"Oh," answered Bucklaw, "my dream's out—I thought I heard Caleb this morning pressing some unfortunate fellow to a drink of cold water, and assuring him it was better for his stomach in the morning than ale or brandy."

"It was my Lord of A——'s courier," said Ravenswood, "who was doomed to experience his ostentatious hospitality, which I believe ended in sour beer and herrings—Read, and you will see the news he has brought us."

"I will as fast as I can," said Bucklaw ; "but I am no great clerk, nor does his lordship seem to be the first of scribes."

(The reader will peruse, in a few seconds, by the aid of our friend Ballantyne's* types, what took Bucklaw a good half-hour in perusal, though assisted by the Master of Ravenswood.) The tenor was as follows :—

"RIGHT HONORABLE OUR COUSIN,—Our hearty commendations premised, these come to assure you of the interest which we take in your welfare, and in your purposes toward its augmentation. If we have been less active in showing forth our effective good-will toward you than, as a loving kinsman and blood-relative, we would willingly have desired, we request that you will impute it to lack of opportunity to show our good-liking, not to any coldness of our will. Touching your resolution to travel in foreign parts, as at this time we hold the same little advisable, in respect than your ill-willers may, according to the custom of such persons, impute motives for your journey, whereof, although we know and believe you to be as clear as ourselves, yet natheless their words may find credence in places where the belief in them may much prejudice you, and

* Note D. The Ballantynes.

which we should see with more unwillingness and displeasure than with means of remedy.

"Having thus, as becometh our kindred, given you our poor mind on the subject of your journeying forth of Scotland, we would willingly add reasons of weight, which might materially advantage you and your father's house, thereby to determine you to abide at Wolf's Crag, until this harvest season shall be passed over. But what sayeth the proverb, *verbum sapienti*,--a word is more to him that hath wisdom than a sermon to a fool. And albeit we have written this poor scroll with our own hand and are well assured of the fidelity of our messenger, as him that is many ways bounden to us, yet so it is, that sliddery ways crave wary walking, and that we may not peril upon paper matters which we would gladly impart to you by word of mouth. Wherefore, it was our purpose to have prayed you heartily to come to this barren Highland country to kill a stag, and to treat of the matters which we are now more painfully inditing to you anent. But commodity does not serve at present for such our meeting, which, therefore, shall be deferred until sic time as we may in all mirth rehearse those things whereof we now keep silence. Meantime, we pray you to think that we are, and will still be, your good kinsman and well-wisher, waiting but for times of whilk we do, as it were, entertain a twilight prospect, and appear and hope to be also your effectual well-doer. And in which hope we heartily write ourself,

"Right Honorable,

"Your loving cousin,

"A——.

"Given from our poor house of B——, etc."

Superscribed—"For the right honorable, and our honored kinsman, the Master of Ravenswood. These, with haste, haste, post haste—ride and run until these be delivered."

"What think you of this epistle, Bucklaw?" said the Master, when his companion had hammered out all the sense, and almost all the words of which it consisted.

"Truly, that the Marquis's meaning is as great a riddle as his manuscript. He is really in much need of Wit's Interpreter, or the Complete Letter Writer, and were I you, I would send him a copy by the bearer. He writes you very kindly to remain wasting your time and your money in this vile, stupid, oppressed country, without so much as offering you the countenance and shelter of his house. In my opinion, he has some scheme in view in which he supposes you can be useful, and he wishes to

keep you at hand, to make use of you when it ripens, reserving the power of turning you adrift, should his plot fail in the concoction."

"His plot?—then you suppose it is a treasonable business," answered Ravenswood.

"What else can it be?" replied Bucklaw; "the Marquis has been long suspected to have an eye to Saint Germain's."

"He should not engage me rashly in such an adventure," said Ravenswood; "when I recollect the times of the first and second Charles, and of the last James, truly, I see little reason, that, as a man or a patriot, I should draw my sword for their descendants."

"Humph!" replied Bucklaw; "so you have set yourself down to mourn over the crop-eared dogs, whom honest Claver's e treated as they deserved?"

"They first gave the dogs an ill name, and then hanged them," replied Ravenswood. "I hope to see the day when justice shall be opened to Whig and Tory, and when these nicknames shall only be used among coffee-house politicians, as slut and jade are among apple-women, as cant terms of idle spite and rancor."

"That will not be in our days, Master—the iron has entered too deeply into our sides and our souls."

"It will be, however, one day," replied the Master, "men will not always start at these nicknames as at a trumpet sound. As social life is better protected, its comforts will become too dear to be hazarded without some better reason than speculative politics."

"It is fine talking," answered Bucklaw; "but my heart is with the old song,—

To see good corn upon the rigs,
And a gallows built to hang the Whigs,
And the right restored where the right should be,
O, that is the thing that would wanton me."

"You may sing as loudly as you will, *cantabit vacuus*,"—answered the Master; "but I believe the Marquis is too wise, at least too wary, to join you in such a burden. I suspect he alludes to a revolution in the Scottish Privy Council, rather than in the British kingdoms."

"Oh, confusion to your state tricks!" exclaimed Bucklaw, "your cold calculating manœuvres, which old gentlemen in wrought nightcaps and furred gowns execute like so many games at chess, and displace a treasurer or lord commissioner as they would take a rook or a pawn. Tennis for my sport, and battle

for my earnest ! My racket and my sword for my plaything and bread-winner ! And you, Master, so deep and considerate as you would seem, you have that within you makes the blood boil faster than suits your present humor of moralizing on political truths. You are one of those wise men who see everything with great composure till their blood is up, and then—woe to any who should put them in mind of their own prudential maxims !”

“Perhaps,” said Ravenswood, “you read me more rightly than I can myself. But to think justly will certainly go some length in helping me to act so. But, hark ! I hear Caleb tolling the dinner-bell.”

“Which he always does with the more sonorous grace, in proportion to the meagreness of the cheer which he has provided,” said Bucklaw ; “as if that infernal clang and jangle, which will one day bring the belfry down the cliff, could convert a starved hen into a fat capon, and a blade-bone of mutton into a haunch of venison.”

“I wish we may be so well off as your worst conjectures surmise, Bucklaw, from the extreme solemnity and ceremony with which Caleb seems to place on the table that solitary covered dish.”

“Uncover, Caleb ! uncover, for Heaven’s sake !” said Bucklaw ; “let us have what you can give us without preface—Why, it stands well enough, man,” he continued, addressing impatiently the ancient butler, who, without reply, kept shifting the dish, until he had at length placed it with mathematical precision in the very midst of the table.

“What have we got here, Caleb ?” inquired the master in his turn.

“Ahem ! sir, ye sould have known before ; but his honor the Laird of Bucklaw is so impatient,” answered Caleb, still holding the dish with one hand, and the cover with the other, with evident reluctance to disclose the contents.

“But what is it, a God’s name—not a pair of clean spurs, I hope, in the border fashion of old times !”

“Ahem ! ahem !” reiterated Caleb, “your honor is pleased to be facetious—nathelless, I might presume to say it was a convenient fashion used, as I have heard, in an honorable and thriving family. But touching your present dinner, I judged that this being Saint Magdalene’s Eve, who was a worthy queen of Scotland in her day, your honors might judge it decorous, if not altogether to fast, yet only to sustain nature with some slight refection, as ane saulted herring or the like.” And, uncovering the dish, he displayed four of the savory fishes which he mentioned, adding, in a subdued tone, “*that*

they were no just common herring neither, being every one melters, and sauted with uncommon care by the housekeeper (poor Mysie) for his honor's especial use."

"Out upon all apologies!" said the Master, "let us eat the herrings, since there is nothing better to be had—but I begin to think with you, Bucklaw, that we are consuming the last green leaf, and that, in spite of the Marquis's political machinations, we must positively shift camp for want of forage, without waiting the issue of them."

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

Ay, and when huntsmen wind the merry horn,
And from its covert starts the fearful prey,
Who, warm'd with youth's blood in his swelling veins,
Would, like a lifeless clod, outstretched lie,
Shut out from all the fair creation offers?

ETHWALD, *Scene I. Act I.*

LIGHT meals procure light slumbers; and therefore it is not surprising, that, considering the fare which Caleb's conscience, or his necessity, assuming, as will sometimes happen, that disguise had assigned to the guests of Wolf's Crag, their slumbers should have been short.

In the morning Bucklaw rushed into his host's apartment with a loud halloo, which might have awaked the dead.

"Up! up! in the name of Heaven—the hunters are out, the only piece of sport I have seen this month; and you lie here, Master, on a bed that has little to recommend it, except that it may be something softer than the stone floor of your ancestor's vault."

"I wish," said Ravenswood, raising his head peevishly, "you had forborne so early a jest, Mr. Hayston—it is really no pleasure to lose the very short repose which I had just begun to enjoy, after a night spent in thoughts upon fortune far harder than my couch, Bucklaw."

"Pshaw, pshaw!" replied his guest; "get up—get up—the hounds are abroad—I have saddled the horses myself, for old Caleb was calling for grooms and lackeys, and would never have proceeded without two hours' apology for the absence of men who were a hundred miles off.—Get up, Master—I say, the hounds are out—get up, I say—the hunt is up." And off ran Bucklaw.

"And I say," said the Master, rising slowly, "that nothing can concern me less. Whose hounds come so near to us?"

"The Honorable Lord Bittlebrains'," answered Caleb, who had followed the impatient Laird of Bucklaw into his master's bedroom, "and truly I ken nae tittle they have to be yowling and howling within the freedoms and immunities of your lordship's right of free forestry."

"Nor I, Caleb," replied Ravenswood, "excepting that they have bought both the lands and the right of forestry, and may think themselves entitled to exercise the rights they have paid their money for."

"It may be sae, my lord," replied Caleb; "but it's no gentleman's deed of them to come here and exercise such like right, and your lordship living at your ain castle of Wolf's Crag. Lord Bittlebrains would do weel to remember what his folk have been."

"And we what we now are," said the Master with suppressed bitterness of feeling. "But reach me my cloak, Caleb, and I will indulge Bucklaw with a sight of this chase. It is selfish to sacrifice my guest's pleasure to my own."

"Sacrifice!" echoed Caleb, in a tone which seemed to imply the total absurdity of his master making the least concession in deference to any one—"Sacrifice indeed!—but I crave your honor's pardon—and whilk doublet is it your pleasure to wear?"

"Any one you will, Caleb—my wardrobe, I suppose, is not very extensive."

"Not extensive!" echoed his assistant; "when there is the gray and silver that your lordship bestowed on Hew Hildebrand, your outrider—and the French velvet that went with my lord your father—(be gracious to him!)—my lord your father's auld wardrobe to the pair friends of the family—and the drap-de-berry"—

"Which I gave to you, Caleb, and which, I suppose, is the only dress we have any chance to come at, except that I wore yesterday—pray, hand me that, and say no more about it."

"If your honor has a fancy," replied Caleb, "and doubtless it's a sad-colored suit, and you are in mourning—nevertheless I have never tried on the drap-de-berry—ill wad it become me—and your honor having no change of claiaths at this present—and it's weel brushed, and as there are leddies down yonder"—

"Ladies!" said Ravenswood; "and what ladies, pray?"

"What do I ken, your lordship?—looking down at them from the Warden's Tower, I could but see them glent by wi'

their bridles ringing, and their feathers fluttering, like the court of Elfland."

"Well, well, Caleb," replied the Master, "help me on with my cloak, and hand me my sword-belt.—What clatter is that in the courtyard?"

"Just Bucklaw bringing out the horses," said Caleb, after a glance through the window, "as if there werena men eneugh in the castle, or as if I couldna serve the turn of ony o' them that are out o' the gate."

"Alas! Caleb, we should want little, if your ability were equal to your will," replied his master.

"And I hope your lordship disna want that muckle," said Caleb; "for, considering a' things, I trust we support the credit of the family as weel as things will permit of—only Bucklaw is aye sae frank and sae forward.—And there he has brought out your lordship's palfrey without the saddle being decored wi' the broidered sumpter-cloth! and I could have brushed it in a minute."

"It is all very well," said his master, escaping from him, and descending the narrow and steep winding staircase, which led to the courtyard."

"It *may* be a' very weel," said Caleb, somewhat peevishly; "but if your lordship wad tarry a bit, I will tell you what will *not* be very weel."

"And what is that?" said Ravenswood, impatiently, but stopping at the same time.

"Why, just that ye suld speer ony gentleman hame to dinner; for I canna mak anither fast on a feast day, as when I cam ower Bucklaw wi' Queen Margaret—and, to speak truth, if your lordship wad but please to cast yoursell in the way of dining wi' Lord Bittlebrains, I'se warrand I wad cast about brawly for the morn; or if, stead o' that, ye wad but dine wi' them at the change-house, ye might mak your shift for the lawing; ye might say ye had forgot your purse—or that the carline awed ye rent, and that ye wad allow it in the settlement."

"Or any other lie that came uppermost, I suppose?" said his master. "Good-bye, Caleb; I commend your care for the honor of the family." And, throwing himself on his horse, he followed Bucklaw, who, at the manifest risk of his neck, had begun to gallop down the steep path which led from the tower, as soon as he saw Ravenswood have his foot in the stirrup.

Caleb Balderstone looked anxiously after them, and shook his thin gray locks—"And I trust that they will come to no

evil—but they have reached the plain, and folk cannot say but that the horse are hearty and in spirits.”

Animated by the natural impetuosity and fire of his temper, young Bucklaw rushed on with the careless speed of a whirlwind. Ravenswood was scarce more moderate in his pace, for his was a mind unwillingly roused from contemplative inactivity; but which, when once put into motion, acquired a spirit of forcible and violent progression. Neither was his eagerness proportioned in all cases to the motive of impulse, but might be compared to the speed of a stone, which rushes with like fury down the hill, whether it was first put in motion by the arm of a giant or the hand of a boy. He felt, therefore, in an ordinary degree, the headlong impulse of the chase, a pastime so natural to youth of all ranks, that it seems rather to be an inherent passion in our animal nature, which levels all differences of rank and education, than an acquired habit of rapid exercise.

The repeated bursts of the French horn, which was then always used for the encouragement and direction of the hounds—the deep, though distant baying of the pack—the half-heard cries of the huntsmen—the half-seen forms which were discovered, now emerging from glens which crossed the moor, now sweeping over its surface, now picking their way where it was impeded by morasses; and above all, the feeling of his own rapid motion, animated the Master of Ravenswood, at least for the moment, above the recollections of a more painful nature by which he was surrounded. The first thing which recalled him to those unpleasing circumstances, was feeling that his horse, notwithstanding all the advantages which he received from his rider’s knowledge of the country, was unable to keep up with the chase. As he drew his bridle up with the bitter feeling, that his poverty excluded him from the favorite recreation of his forefathers, and indeed, their sole employment when not engaged in military pursuits, he was accosted by a well-mounted stranger, who, unobserved, had kept near him during the earlier part of his career.

“Your horse is blown,” said the man, with a complaisance seldom used in a hunting-field, “Might I crave your honor to make use of mine?”

“Sir,” said Ravenswood, more surprised than pleased at such a proposal, “I really do not know how I have merited such a favor at a stranger’s hands.”

“Never ask a question about it, Master,” said Bucklaw, who, with great unwillingness, had hitherto reined in his own gallant steed, not to outride his host and entertainer. “Take the goods

the gods provide you, as the great John Dryden says—or stay—here, my friend, lend me that horse;—I see you have been puzzled to rein him up this half-hour. I'll take the devil out of him for you. Now, Master, do you ride mine, which will carry you like an eagle."

And throwing the rein of his own horse to the Master of Ravenswood, he sprang upon that which the stranger resigned to him, and continued his career at full speed.

"Was ever so thoughtless a being!" said the Master; "and you, my friend, how could you trust him with your horse?"

"The horse," said the man, "belongs to a person who will make your honor, or any of your honorable friends, most welcome to him, flesh and fell."

"And the owner's name is——?" asked Ravenswood.

"Your honor must excuse me, you will learn that from himself.—If you please to take your friend's horse, and leave me your galloway, I will meet you after the fall of the stag, for I hear they are blowing him at bay."

"I believe, my friend, it will be the best way to recover your good horse for you," answered Ravenswood; and mounting the nag of his friend Bucklaw he made all the haste in his power to the spot where the blast of the horn announced that the stag's career was nearly terminated.

These jovial sounds were intermixed with the huntsman's shouts of "Hyke a Talbot! Hyke a Teviot! now boys, now!" and similar cheering halloos of the olden hunting-field, to which the impatient yelling of the hounds, now close on the object of their pursuit, gave a lively and unremitting chorus. The straggling riders began now to rally toward the scene of action, collecting from different points as to a common centre.

Bucklaw kept the start which he had gotten, and arrived first at the spot, where the stag, incapable of sustaining a more prolonged flight, had turned upon the hounds, and, in the hunter's phrase, was at bay. With his stately head bent down, his sides white with foam, his eyes strained betwixt rage and terror, the hunted animal had now in his turn become an object of intimidation to his pursuers. The hunters came up one by one, and watched an opportunity to assail him with some advantage, which, in such circumstances, can only be done with caution. The dogs stood aloof and bayed loudly, intimating at once eagerness and fear, and each of the sportsmen seemed to expect that his comrade would take upon him the perilous task of assaulting and disabling the animal. The ground, which was a hollow in the common or moor, afforded little advantage for approaching the stag unobserved; and general was the

shout of triumph when Bucklaw, with the dexterity proper to an accomplished cavalier of the day, sprang from his horse, and dashing suddenly and swiftly at the stag, brought him to the ground by a cut on the hind leg with his short hunting-sword. The pack, rushing in upon their disabled enemy, soon ended his painful struggles, and solemnized his fall with their clamor—the hunters, with their horns and voices, whooping and blowing a *mort*, or death-note, which resounded far over the billows of the adjacent ocean.

The huntsman then withdrew the hounds from the throttled stag, and on his knee presented his knife to a fair female form, on a white palfrey, whose terror, or perhaps her compassion, had till then kept her at some distance. She wore a black silk riding-mask, which was then a common fashion, as well for preserving the complexion from sun and rain, as from an idea of decorum, which did not permit a lady to appear barefaced while engaged in a boisterous sport, and attended by a promiscuous company. The richness of her dress, however, as well as the mettle and form of her palfrey, together with the silvan compliment paid to her by the huntsman, pointed her out to Bucklaw as the principal person in the field. It was not without a feeling of pity, approaching even to contempt, that this enthusiastic hunter observed her refuse the huntsman's knife, presented to her for the purpose of making the first incision in the stag's breast, and thereby discovering the quality of the venison. He felt more than half inclined to pay his compliments to her; but it had been Bucklaw's misfortune, that his habits of life had not rendered him familiarly acquainted with the higher and better classes of female society, so that, with all his natural audacity, he felt sheepish and bashful when it became necessary to address a lady of distinction.

Taking unto himself heart of grace (to use his own phrase), he did at length summon up resolution enough to give the fair huntress good time of the day, and trust that her sport had answered her expectation. Her answer was very courteously and modestly expressed, and testified some gratitude to the gallant cavalier, whose exploit had terminated the chase so adroitly, when the hounds and huntsmen seemed somewhat at a stand.

“Uds daggers and scabbard, madam,” said Bucklaw, whom this observation brought at once upon his own ground, “there is no difficulty or merit in that matter at all, so that a fellow is not too much afraid of having a pair of antlers in his guts. I have hunted at force five hundred times, madam; and I never yet saw the stag at bay, by land or water, but I durst have gone roundly in on him. It is all use and wont, madam; and I'll tell

you, madam, for all that, it must be done with good heed and caution; and you will do well, madam, to have your hunting-sword both right sharp and double-edged, that you may strike either fore-handed or back-handed, as you see reason, for a hurt with a buck's horn is a perilous and somewhat venomous matter.

"I am afraid, sir," said the young lady, and her smile was scarce concealed by her vizard, "I shall have little use for such careful preparation."

"But the gentleman says very right for all that, my lady," said an old huntsman, who had listened to Bucklaw's harangue with no small edification; "and I have heard my father say, who was a forester at the Cabrach, that a wild boar's gaunch is more easily healed than a hurt from the deer's horn, for so says the old woodman's rhyme—

If thou be hurt with horn of hart, it brings thee to thy bier;
But tusk of boar shall leeches heal—thereof have lesser fear."

"An I might advise," continued Bucklaw, who was now in his element, and desirous of assuming the whole management, "as the hounds are surbated and weary, the head of the stag should be cabbaged in order to reward them; and if I may presume to speak, the huntsman, who is to break up the stag, ought to drink to your good ladyship's health a good lusty bicker of ale, or a tass of brandy; for if he breaks him up without drinking, the venison will not keep well."

This very agreeable prescription received, as will be readily believed, all acceptance from the huntsman, who, in requital, offered to Bucklaw the compliment of his knife, which the young lady had declined. This polite proffer was seconded by his mistress.

"I believe, sir," she said, withdrawing herself from the circle, "that my father, for whose amusement Lord Bittlebrains' hounds have been out to-day, will readily surrender all care of these matters to a gentleman of your experience."

Then, bending gracefully from her horse, she wished him good morning, and, attended by one or two domestics, who seemed immediately attached to her service, retired from the scene of action, to which Bucklaw, too much delighted with an opportunity of displaying his wood-craft to care about man or woman either, paid little attention; but was soon stripped to his doublet, with tucked-up sleeves, and naked arms up to the elbows in blood and grease, slashing, cutting, hacking, and hewing with the precision of Sir Tristrem himself, and wrangling and disputing with all around him concerning nombles, briskets, flankards,

and ravenbones, then usual terms of the art of hunting, or of butchery, whichever the reader chooses to call it, which are now probably antiquated.

When Ravenswood, who followed a short space behind his friend, saw that the stag had fallen, his temporary ardor for the chase gave way to that feeling of reluctance which he endured at encountering in his fallen fortunes the gaze whether of equals or inferiors. He reined up his horse on the top of a gentle eminence, from which he observed the busy and gay scene beneath him, and heard the whoops of the huntsmen gaily mingled with the cry of the dogs, and the neighing and trampling of the horses. But these jovial sounds fell sadly on the ear of the ruined nobleman. The chase, with all its train of excitations, has ever since feudal times been accounted the almost exclusive privilege of the aristocracy, and was anciently their chief employment in times of peace. The sense that he was excluded by his situation from enjoying the silvan sport, which his rank assigned to him as a special prerogative, and the feeling that new men were now exercising it over the downs, which had been jealously reserved by his ancestors for their own amusement, while he, the heir of the domain, was fain to hold himself at a distance from their party, awakened reflections calculated to depress deeply a mind like Ravenswood's, which was naturally contemplative and melancholy. His pride, however, soon shook off this feeling of dejection, and it gave way to impatience upon finding that his volatile friend, Bucklaw, seemed in no hurry to return with his borrowed steed, which Ravenswood, before leaving the field, wished to see restored to the obliging owner. As he was about to move toward the group of assembled huntsmen, he was joined by a horseman, who like himself had kept aloof during the fall of the deer.

This personage seemed stricken in years. He wore a scarlet cloak, buttoning high up on his face, and his hat was unlooped and slouched, probably by way of defence against the weather. His horse, a strong and steady palfrey, was calculated for a rider who proposed to witness the sport of the day, rather than to share it. An attendant waited at some distance, and the whole equipment was that of an elderly gentleman of rank and fashion. He accosted Ravenswood very politely, but not without some embarrassment.

"You seem a gallant young gentleman, sir," he said, "and yet appear as indifferent to this brave sport as if you had my load of years on your shoulders."

"I have followed the sport with more spirit on other occasions," replied the Master; "at present, late events in my family

must be my apology—and besides,” he added, “I was but indifferently mounted at the beginning of the sport.”

“I think,” said the stranger, “one of my attendants had the sense to accommodate your friend with a horse.”

“I was much indebted to his politeness and yours,” replied Ravenswood. My friend is Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw, whom I daresay you will be sure to find in the thick of the keenest sportsmen. He will return your servant’s horse, and take my pony in exchange—and will add,” he concluded, turning his horse’s head from the stranger, “his best acknowledgments to mine for the accommodation.”

The Master of Ravenswood, having thus expressed himself, began to move homeward, with the manner of one who has taken leave of his company. But the stranger was not so to be shaken off. He turned his horse at the same time, and rode in the same direction so near to the Master, that, without outriding him, which the formal civility of the time, and the respect due to the stranger’s age and recent civility would have rendered improper, he could not easily escape from his company.

The stranger did not long remain silent. “This, then,” he said, “is the ancient Castle of Wolf’s Crag, often mentioned in the Scottish records,” looking to the old tower, then darkening under the influence of a stormy cloud, that formed its background; for at the distance of a short mile, the chase having been circuitous, had brought the hunters nearly back to the point which they had attained, when Ravenswood and Bucklaw had set forward to join them.

Ravenswood answered this observation with a cold and distant assent.

“It was, as I have heard,” continued the stranger, unabashed by his coldness, “one of the most early possessions of the honorable family of Ravenswood.”

“Their earliest possession,” answered the Master, “and probably their latest,”

“I—I—I should hope not, sir,” answered the stranger, clearing his voice with more than one cough, and making an effort to overcome a certain degree of hesitation,—“Scotland knows what she owes to this ancient family, and remembers their frequent and honorable achievements. I have little doubt, that, were it properly represented to her majesty, that so ancient and noble a family were subjected to dilapidation—I mean to decay—means might be found *ad re-ædificandum antiquam domum*”—

“I will save you the trouble, sir, of discussing this point further,” interrupted the Master, haughtily. “I am the heir

of that unfortunate house—I am the Master of Ravenswood. And you, sir, who seem to be a gentleman of fashion and education, must be sensible, that the next mortification after being unhappy, is the being loaded with undesired commiseration.”

“I beg your pardon, sir,” said the elder horseman—“I did not know—I am sensible I ought not to have mentioned—nothing could be further from my thoughts than to suppose”——

“There are no apologies necessary, sir,” answered Ravenswood, “for here, I suppose, our roads separate, and I assure you that we part in perfect equanimity on my side.”

As speaking these words, he directed his horse’s head toward a narrow causeway, the ancient approach to Wolf’s Crag, of which it might be truly said, in the words of the Bard of Hope, that.

Travelled by few was the grass-cover’d road,
Where the hunter of deer and the warrior trode,
To his hills that encircle the sea.

But, ere he could disengage himself from his companion, the young lady we have already mentioned came up to join the stranger, followed by her servants.

“Daughter,” said the stranger to the masked damsel, “this is the Master of Ravenswood.”

It would have been natural that the gentleman should have replied to this introduction ; but there was something in the graceful form and retiring modesty of the female to whom he was thus presented, which not only prevented him from inquiring to whom, and by whom, the annunciation had been made, but which even for the time struck him absolutely mute. At this moment the cloud which had long lowered above the height on which Wolf’s Crag is situated, and which now, as it advanced, spread itself in darker and denser folds both over land and sea, hiding the distant objects, and obscuring those which were nearer, turning the sea to a leaden complexion, and the heath to a darker brown, began now, by one or two distant peals, to announce the thunders with which it was fraught ; while two flashes of lightning, following each other very closely, showed in the distance the gray turrets of Wolf’s Crag, and, more nearly, the rolling billows of the ocean, crested suddenly with red and dazzling light.

The horse of the fair huntress showed symptoms of impatience and restiveness, and it became impossible for Ravenswood, as a man or a gentleman, to leave her abruptly to the care of an aged father or her menial attendants. He was, or believed himself, obliged in courtesy to take hold of her bridle,

and assist her in managing the unruly animal. While he was thus engaged, the old gentleman observed that the storm seemed to increase—that they were far from Lord Bittlebrains', whose guests they were for the present—and that he would be obliged to the Master of Ravenswood to point him the way to the nearest place of refuge from the storm. At the same time, he cast a wistful and embarrassed look toward the Tower of Wolf's Crag, which seemed to render it almost impossible for the owner to avoid offering an old man and a lady, in such an emergency, the temporary use of his house. Indeed, the condition of the young huntress made this courtesy indispensable ; for, in the course of the services which he rendered, he could not but perceive that she trembled much, and was extremely agitated, from her apprehensions, doubtless, of the coming storm.

I know not if the Master of Ravenswood shared her terrors, but he was not entirely free from something like a similar disorder of nerves, as he observed, "The Tower of Wolf's Crag has nothing to offer beyond the shelter of its roof, but if that can be acceptable at such a moment"—he paused, as if the rest of the invitation stuck in his throat. But the old gentleman, his self-constituted companion, did not allow him to recede from the invitation, which he had rather suffered to be implied than directly expressed.

"The storm," said the stranger, "must be an apology for waiving ceremony—his daughter's health was weak—she had suffered much from a recent alarm—he trusted their intrusion on the Master of Ravenswood's hospitality would not be altogether unpardonable in the circumstances of the case—his child's safety must be dearer to him than ceremony."

There was no room to retreat. The Master of Ravenswood led the way, continuing to keep hold of the lady's bridle to prevent her horse from starting at some unexpected explosion of thunder. He was not so bewildered in his own hurried reflections, but that he remarked, that the deadly paleness which had occupied her neck and temples, and such of her features as the riding-mask left exposed, gave place to a deep and rosy suffusion ; and he felt with embarrassment that a flush was by tacit sympathy excited in his own cheeks. The stranger, with watchfulness which he disguised under apprehensions for the safety of his daughter, continued to observe the expression of the Master's countenance as they ascended the hill to Wolf's Crag. When they stood in front of that ancient fortress, Ravenswood's emotions were of a very complicated description ; and as he led the way into the rude courtyard, and halloo'd to

Caleb to give attendance, there was a tone of sternness, almost of fierceness, which seemed somewhat alien from the courtesies of one who is receiving honored guests.

Caleb came ; and not the paleness of the fair stranger at the first approach of the thunder, nor the paleness of any other person, in any other circumstances whatever, equaled that which overcame the thin cheeks of the disconsolate seneschal, when he beheld this accession of guests to the castle, and reflected that the dinner hour was fast approaching. "Is he daft?" he muttered to himself,—“is he clean daft a'thegither, to bring lords and leddies, and a host o' folk behint them, and twal-o'clock chappit?" Then approaching the Master, he craved pardon for having permitted the rest of his people to go out to see the hunt, observing, that "they wad never think of his lordship coming back till mirk night, and that he dreaded they might play the truant."

"Silence, Balderston!" said Ravenswood, sternly; "your folly is unseasonable.—Sir and madam," he said, turning to his guests, "this old man, and a yet older and more imbecile female domestic, form my whole retinue. Our means of refreshing you are more scanty than even so miserable a retinue, and a dwelling so dilapidated, might seem to promise you; but, such as they may chance to be, you may command them."

The elder stranger, struck with the ruined and even savage appearance of the Tower, rendered still more disconsolate by the lowering and gloomy sky, and perhaps not altogether unmoved by the grave and determined voice in which their host addressed them, looked round him anxiously, as if he half repented the readiness with which he had accepted the offered hospitality. But there was now no opportunity of receding from the situation in which he had placed himself.

As for Caleb, he was so utterly stunned by his master's public and unqualified acknowledgment of the nakedness of the land, that for two minutes he could only mutter within his heblomadal beard, which had not felt the razor for six days, "He's daft—clean daft—red wud, and awa wi't! But deil hae Caleb Balderston," said he, collecting his powers of invention and resource, "if the family shall lose credit, if he were as mad as the seven wise masters!" he then boldly advanced, and in spite of his master's frowns and impatience, gravely asked, "if he should not serve up some slight refection for the young leddy, and a glass of tokay, or old sack—or"—

"Truce to this ill-timed foolery," said the Master, sternly,

—"put the horses into the stable, and interrupt us no *more* with your absurdities."

"Your honor's pleasure is to be obeyed aboon a' things," said Caleb; "nevertheless, as for the sack and tokay, which it is not your noble guests' pleasure to accept"—

But here the voice of Bucklaw, heard even above the clattering of hoofs and braying of horns with which it mingled, announced that he was scaling the pathway to the Tower at the head of the greater part of the gallant hunting train.

"The deil be in me," said Caleb, taking heart in spite of this new invasion of Philistines, "if they shall beat me yet! The hellicat ne'er-do-weel!—to bring such a crew here, that will expect to find brandy as plenty as ditch-water, and he kenning sae absolutely the case in whilk we stand for the present! But I trow, could I get rid of thae gaping gowks of flunkies that hae won into the courtyard at the back of their betters, as mony a man gets preferment, I could make a' right yet."

The measures which he took to execute this dauntless resolution the reader shall learn in the next chapter.

CHAPTER NINTH.

With throat unslaked, with black lips baked,

Agape they heard him call;

Gramercy they for joy did grin,

And all at once their breath drew in,

As they had been drinking all!

COLERIDGE'S "RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER."

HAYSTON of Bucklaw was one of the thoughtless class who never hesitate between their friend and their jest. When it was announced that the principal persons of the chase had taken their route toward Wolf's Crag, the huntsmen, as a point of civility, offered to transfer the venison to that mansion; a proffer which was readily accepted by Bucklaw, who thought much of the astonishment which their arrival in full body would occasion poor old Caleb Balderston, and very little of the dilemma to which he was about to expose his friend the Master, so ill circumstanced to receive such a party. But in old Caleb he had to do with a crafty and alert antagonist, prompt at supplying, upon all emergencies, evasions and excuses suitable, as he thought, to the dignity of the family.

"Praise be blest!" said Caleb to himself, "ae leaf of the muckle gate has been swung to wi' yestreen's wind, and I think I can manage to shut the ither."

But he was desirous, like a prudent governor, at the same time to get rid, if possible, of the internal enemy, in which light he considered almost every one who ate and drank, ere he took measures to exclude those whom their jocund noise now pronounced to be near at hand. He waited, therefore, with impatience until his master had shown his two principal guests into the tower, and then commenced his operations.

"I think," he said to the stranger menials, "that as they are bringing the stag's head to the castle in all honor, we, who are in-dwellers, should receive them at the gate."

The unwary grooms had no sooner hurried out, in compliance with this insidious hint, than, one folding-door of the ancient gate being already closed by the wind, as has been already intimated, honest Caleb lost no time in shutting the other with a clang, which resounded from donjon vault to battlement. Having thus secured the pass, he forthwith indulged the excluded huntsmen in brief parley, from a small projecting window, or shot-hole, through which, in former days, the warders were wont to reconnoitre those who presented themselves before the gates. He gave them to understand, in a short and pithy speech, that the gate of the castle was never on any account opened during meal-times—that his honor, the Master of Ravenswood, and some guests of quality, had just sat down to dinner—that there was excellent brandy at the hostler's wife's at Wolf's Hope down below—and he held out some obscure hint that the reckoning would be discharged by the Master; but this was uttered in a very dubious and oracular strain, for, like Louis XIV., Caleb Balderston hesitated to carry finesse so far as direct falsehood, and was content to deceive, if possible, without directly lying.

This annunciation was received with surprise by some, with laughter by others, and with dismay by the expelled lackeys, who endeavored to demonstrate that their right of re-admission, for the purpose of waiting upon their master and mistress, was at least indisputable. But Caleb was not in a humor to understand or admit any distinctions. He stuck to his original proposition with that dogged, but convenient pertinacity, which is armed against all conviction, and deaf to all reasoning.

Bucklaw now came from the rear of the party, and demanded admittance in a very angry tone. But the resolution of Caleb was immovable.

"If the king on the throne were at the gate," he declared,

“his ten fingers should never open it contrair to the established use and wont of the family of Ravenswood, and his duty as their head-servant.”

Bucklaw was now extremely incensed, and with more oaths and curses than we care to repeat, declared himself most unworthily treated, and demanded peremptorily to speak with the Master of Ravenswood himself. But to this, also, Caleb turned a deaf ear.

“He's as soon a-bleeze as a tap of tow the lad Bucklaw,” he said; “but the deil of ony master's face he shall see till he has sleepit and waken'd on't. He'll ken himsell better the morn's morning. It sets the like o' him to be bringing a crew of drunken hunters here, when he kens there is but little preparation to sloken his ain drought.” And he disappeared from the window, leaving them all to digest their exclusion as they best might.

But another person, of whose presence Caleb, in the animation of the debate, was not aware, had listened in silence to its progress. This was the principal domestic of the stranger—a man of trust and consequence—the same who, in the hunting-field, had accommodated Bucklaw with the use of his horse. He was in the stable when Caleb had contrived the expulsion of his fellow-servants, and thus avoided sharing the same fate, from which his personal importance would certainly not have otherwise saved him.

This personage perceived the manœuvre of Caleb, easily appreciated the motive of his conduct, and knowing his master's intentions toward the family of Ravenswood, had no difficulty as to the line of conduct he ought to adopt. He took the place of Caleb (unperceived by the latter) at the post of audience which he had just left, and announced to the assembled domestics, “that it was his master's pleasure that Lord Bittlebrains' retinue and his own should go down to the adjacent change-house, and call for what refreshments they might have occasion for, and he should take care to discharge the lawing.”

The jolly troop of huntsmen retired from the inhospitable gate of Wolf's Crag, execrating, as they descended the steep pathway, the niggard and unworthy disposition of the proprietor, and damning, with more than silvan license, both the castle and its inhabitants. Bucklaw, with many qualities which would have made him a man of worth and judgment in more favorable circumstances, had been so utterly neglected in point of education, that he was apt to think and feel according to the ideas of the companions of his pleasures. The praises which had recently been heaped upon himself he contrasted with the

general abuse now levelled against Ravenswood—he recalled to his mind the dull and monotonous days he had spent in the Tower of Wolf's Crag, compared with the joviality of his usual life—he felt, with great indignation, his exclusion from the castle, which he considered as a gross affront, and every mingled feeling led him to break off the union which he had formed with the Master of Ravenswood.

On arriving at the change-house of the village of Wolf's Hope, he unexpectedly met with an old acquaintance just alighting from his horse. This was no other than the very respectable Captain Craigengelt, who immediately came up to him, and, without appearing to retain any recollection of the indifferent terms on which they had parted, shook him by the hand in the warmest manner possible. A warm grasp of the hand was what Bucklaw could never help returning with cordiality, and no sooner had Craigengelt felt the pressure of his fingers than he knew the terms on which he stood with him.

"Long life to you, Bucklaw!" he exclaimed; "there's life for honest folk in this bad world yet!"

The Jacobites at this period, with what propriety I know not, used, it must be noticed, the term of *honest men* as peculiarly descriptive of their own party.

"Ay, and for others besides, it seems," answered Bucklaw; "otherways, how came you to venture hither, noble Captain?"

"Who—I?—I am as free as the wind at Martinmas, that pays neither land-rent nor annual; all is explained—all settled with the honest old drivelers yonder of Auld Reekie—Pooh! pooh! they dared not keep me a week of days in durance. A certain person has better friends among them than you wot of, and can serve a friend when it is least likely."

"Pshaw!" answered Hayston, who perfectly knew and thoroughly despised the character of this man, "none of your cogging gibberish—tell me truly, are you at liberty and in safety?"

"Free and safe as a whig bailie on the causeway of his own borough, or a canting Presbyterian minister in his own pulpit—and I came to tell you that you need not remain in hiding any longer."

"Then I suppose you call yourself my friend, Captain Craigengelt?" said Bucklaw.

"Friend?" replied Craigengelt, "my cock of the pit! why, I am the very Achates, man, as I have heard scholars say—hand and glove—bark and tree—thine to life and death!"

"I'll try that in a moment," answered Bucklaw. "Thou art never without money, however thou comest by it. Lend

me two pieces to wash the dust out of these honest fellows' throats in the first place, and then"—

"Two pieces? twenty are at thy service, my lad—and twenty to back them."

"Ay—say you so?" said Bucklaw, pausing, for his natural penetration led him to suspect some extraordinary motive lay couched under such an excess of generosity. "Craigengelt, you are either an honest fellow in right good earnest, and I scarce know how to believe that—or you are cleverer than I took you for, and I scarce know how to believe that either."

"*L'un n'empêche pas l'autre*," said Craigengelt, "touch and try—the gold is good as ever was weighed."

He put a quantity of gold pieces into Bucklaw's hand, which he thrust into his pocket without either counting or looking at them, only observing, "that he was so circumstanced that he must enlist, though the devil offered the press-money;" and then turning to the huntsmen, he called out, "Come along, my lads—all is at my cost."

"Long life to Bucklaw!" shouted the men of the chase.

"And confusion to him that takes his share of the sport, and leaves the hunters as dry, as a drum-head," added another by way of corollary."

"The house of Ravenswood was once a gude and an honorable house in this land," said an old man, "but it's lost its credit this day, and the Master has shown himself no better than a greedy cullion."

And with this conclusion, which was unanimously agreed to by all who heard it, they rushed tumultuously into the house of entertainment, where they reveled till a late hour. The jovial temper of Bucklaw seldom permitted him to be nice in the choice of his associates; and on the present occasion, when his joyous debauch received additional zest from the intervention of an unusual space of sobriety, and almost abstinence, he was as happy in leading the revels, as if his comrades had been sons of princes. Craigengelt had his own purposes, in fooling him up to the top of his bent; and having some low humor, much impudence, and the power of singing a good song, understanding besides thoroughly the disposition of his regained associate, he readily succeeded in involving him bumper-deep in the festivity of the meeting.

A very different scene was in the meantime passing in the Tower of Wolf's Crag. When the Master of Ravenswood left the courtyard, too much busied with his own perplexed reflections to pay attention to the manœuvre of Caleb, he ushered his guests into the great hall of the castle,

The indefatigable Balderston, who, from choice or habit, worked on from morning to night, had, by degrees, cleared this desolate apartment of the confused relics of the funeral banquet, and restored it to some order. But not all his skill and labor, in disposing to advantage the little furniture which remained, could remove the dark and disconsolate appearance of those ancient and disfurnished walls. The narrow windows, flanked by deep indentures into the wall, seemed formed rather to exclude than to admit the cheerful light; and the heavy and gloomy appearance of the thunder-sky added still further to the obscurity.

As Ravenswood, with the grace of a gallant of that period, but not without a certain stiffness and embarrassment of manner, handed the young lady to the upper end of the apartment, her father remained standing more near to the door, as if about to disengage himself from his hat and cloak. At this moment the clang of the portal was heard, a sound at which the stranger started, stepped hastily to the window, and looked with an air of alarm at Ravenswood, when he saw that the gate of the court was shut, and his domestics excluded.

"You have nothing to fear, sir," said Ravenswood, gravely; "this roof retains the means of giving protection, though not welcome. Methinks," he added, "it is time that I should know who they are that have thus highly honored my ruined dwelling."

The young lady remained silent and motionless, and the father, to whom the question was more directly addressed, seemed in the situation of a performer who has ventured to take upon himself a part which he finds himself unable to present, and who comes to a pause when it is most to be expected that he should speak. While he endeavored to cover his embarrassment with the exterior ceremonials of a well-bred demeanor, it was obvious, that, in making his bow, one foot shuffled forward, as if to advance--the other backward, as if with the purpose of escape--and as he undid the cape of his coat, and raised his beaver from his face, his fingers fumbled as if the one had been linked with rusted iron, or the other had weighed equal with a stone of lead. The darkness of the sky seemed to increase, as if to supply the want of those mufflings which he laid aside with such evident reluctance. The impatience of Ravenswood increased also in proportion to the delay of the stranger, and he appeared to struggle under agitation, though probably from a very different cause. He labored to restrain his desire to speak, while the stranger, to all appearance, was at a loss for words to express what he felt

it necessary to say. At length Ravenswood's impatience broke the bounds he had imposed upon it.

"I perceive," he said, "that Sir William Ashton is unwilling to announce himself in the Castle of Wolf's Crag."

"I had hoped it was unnecessary," said the Lord Keeper, relieved from his silence, as a spectre by the voice of the exorcist: "and I am obliged to you, Master of Ravenswood, for breaking the ice at once, where circumstances—unhappy circumstances, let me call them—rendered self-introduction peculiarly awkward."

"And am I not then," said the Master of Ravenswood, gravely, "to consider the honor of this visit as purely accidental?"

"Let us distinguish a little," said the Keeper, assuming an appearance of ease which perhaps his heart was a stranger to; "this is an honor which I have eagerly desired for some time, but which I might never have obtained, save for the accident of the storm. My daughter and I are alike grateful for this opportunity of thanking the brave man to whom she owes her life and I mine."

The hatred which divided the great families in the feudal times had lost little of its bitterness, though it no longer expressed itself in deeds of open violence. Not the feelings which Ravenswood had begun to entertain toward Lucy Ashton, not the hospitality due to his guests, were able entirely to subdue, though they warmly combated, the deep passions which arose within him, at beholding his father's foe standing in the hall of the family of which he had in a great measure accelerated the ruin. His look glanced from the father to the daughter with an irresolution, of which Sir William Ashton did not think it proper to await the conclusion. He had now disembarrassed himself of his riding dress, and walking up to his daughter, he undid the fastening of her mask.

"Lucy, my love," he said, raising her and leading her toward Ravenswood, "lay aside your mask, and let us express our gratitude to the Master openly and barefaced."

"If he will condescend to accept it," was all that Lucy uttered, but in a tone so sweetly modulated, and which seemed to imply at once a feeling and a forgiving of the cold reception to which they were exposed, that, coming from a creature so innocent and so beautiful, her words cut Ravenswood to the very heart for his harshness. He muttered something of surprise, something of confusion, and ending with a warm and eager expression of his happiness at being able to afford her shelter under his roof, he saluted her, as the ceremonial of the time

enjoined upon such occasions. Their cheeks had touched and were withdrawn from each other—Ravenswood had not quitted the hand which he had taken in kindly courtesy—a blush, which attached more consequence by far than was usual to such ceremony, still mantled on Lucy Ashton's beautiful cheek, when the apartment was suddenly illuminated by a flash of lightning, which seemed absolutely to swallow the darkness of the hall. Every object might have been for an instant seen distinctly. The slight and half-sinking form of Lucy Ashton, the well-proportioned and stately figure of Ravenswood, his dark features, and the fiery, yet irresolute expression of his eyes,—the old arms and scutcheons which hung on the walls of the apartment, were for an instant distinctly visible to the Keeper by a strong red brilliant glare of light. Its disappearance was almost instantly followed by a burst of thunder, for the storm-cloud was very near the castle; and the peal was so sudden and dreadful, that the old tower rocked to its foundation, and every inmate concluded it was falling upon them. The soot, which had not been disturbed for centuries, showered down the huge tunneled chimneys—lime and dust flew in clouds from the wall; and, whether the lightning had actually struck the castle, or whether through the violent concussion of the air, several heavy stones were hurled from the mouldering battlements into the roaring sea beneath, it might seem as if the ancient founder of the castle were bestriding the thunderstorm, and proclaiming his displeasure at the reconciliation of his descendant with the enemy of his house.

The consternation was general, and it required the efforts of both the Lord Keeper and Ravenswood to keep Lucy from fainting. Thus was the Master a second time engaged in the most delicate and dangerous of all tasks, that of affording support to a beautiful and helpless being, who, as seen before in a similar situation, had already become a favorite of his imagination, both when awake and when slumbering. If the Genius of the House really condemned a union betwixt the Master and his fair guest, the means by which he expressed his sentiments were as unhappily chosen as if he had been a mere mortal. The train of little attentions, absolutely necessary to soothe the young lady's mind, and aid her in composing her spirits necessarily threw the Master of Ravenswood into such an intercourse with her father, as was calculated, for the moment at least, to break down the barrier of feudal enmity which divided them. To express himself churlishly, or even coldly, toward an old man, whose daughter (and *such* a daughter) lay before them, overpowered with natural terror—and all this under his own roof—the thing was impossible; and by the time that Lucy,

extending a hand to each, was able to thank them for their kindness, the Master felt that his sentiments of hostility toward the Lord Keeper were by no means those most predominant in his bosom.

The weather, her state of health, the absence of her attendants, all prevented the possibility of Lucy Ashton renewing her journey to Bittlebrains House, which was full five miles distant; and the Master of Ravenswood could not but, in common courtesy, offer the shelter of his roof for the rest of the day and for the night. But a flush of less soft expression, a look much more habitual to his features, resumed predominance when he mentioned how meanly he was provided for the entertainment of his guests.

"Do not mention deficiencies," said the Lord Keeper, eager to interrupt him and prevent his resuming an alarming topic; "you are preparing to set out for the Continent, and your house is probably for the present unfurnished. All this we understand; but if you mention inconvenience, you will oblige us to seek accommodations in the hamlet."

As the Master of Ravenswood was about to reply, the door of the hall opened, and Caleb Balderston rushed in.

CHAPTER TENTH.

LET them have meat enough, woman—half a hen;
There be old rotten pilchards—put them off too;
'Tis but a little new anointing of them,
And a strong onion, that confounds the savor.

LOVE'S PILGRIMAGE.

THE thunderbolt, which had stunned all who were within hearing of it, had only served to awaken the bold and inventive genius of the flower of Majors-Domo. Almost before the clatter had ceased, and while there was yet scarce an assurance whether the castle was standing or falling, Caleb exclaimed, "Heavens be praised!—this comes to hand like the bowl of a pint-stoup." He then barred the kitchen door in the face of the Lord Keeper's servant, whom he perceived returning from the party at the gate, and muttering, "How the deil cam he in?—but deil may care—Mysie, what are ye sitting shaking and greeting in the chimney neuk for? Come here—or stay where ye are, and skirl as loud as ye can—it's a' ye're gude for—I

say, ye auld deevil, skirl—skirl—louder—louder, woman—gar the gentles hear ye in the ha’—I have heard ye as far off as the Bass for a less matter. And stay—down wi’ that crockery”—

And with a sweeping blow, he threw down from a shelf some articles of pewter and earthenware. He exalted his voice amid the clatter, shouting and roaring in a manner which changed Mysie’s hysterical terrors of the thunder into fears that her old fellow-servant was gone distracted. “He has dung down a’ the bits o’ pigs too—the only thing we had left to haud a soup milk—and he has spilt the hatted kitt that was for the Master’s dinner. Mercy save us, the auld man’s gaen clean and clear wud wi’ the thunner !”

“Haud your tongue, ye b——!” said Caleb, in the impetuous and overbearing triumph of successful invention, “a’s provided now—dinner and a’ thing—the thunner’s done a’ in a clap of a hand !”

“Puir man, he’s muckle astray,” said Mysie, looking at him with a mixture of pity and alarm ; “I wish he may ever come hame to himsell again.”

“Here, ye auld doited deevil,” said Caleb, still exulting in his extrication from a dilemma which had seemed insurmountable ; “keep the strange man out of the kitchen—swear the thunner came down the chimney, and spoiled the best dinner ye ever dressed—beef—bacon—kid—lark—leveret—wild fowl—venison, and what not. Lay it on thick, and never mind expenses. I’ll awa up to the ha’—make a’ the confusion ye can—but be sure ye keep out the strange servant.”

With these charges to his ally, Caleb posted up to the hall, but stopping to reconnoitre through an aperture, which time, for the convenience of many a domestic in succession, had made in the door, and perceiving the situation of Miss Ashton, he had prudence enough to make a pause, both to avoid adding to her alarm, and in order to secure attention to his account of the disastrous effects of the thunder.

But when he perceived that the lady was recovered, and heard the conversation turn upon the accommodation and refreshment which the castle afforded, he thought it time to burst into the room in the manner announced in the last chapter.

“Wull a wins !—such a misfortune to befa’ the House of Ravenswood, and I to live to see it !”

“What is the matter, Caleb ?” said his master, somewhat alarmed in his turn ; “has any part of the castle fallen ?”

“Castle fa’en ?—na, but the sute’s fa’en, and the thunner’s come right down the kitchen-lum, and the things are a’ lying here awa, there awa, like the Laird o’ Hotchpotch’s lands—and

wi' brave guests of honor and quality to entertain"—a low bow here to Sir William Ashton and his daughter—"and naethin left in the house fit to present for dinner—or for supper either for aught that I can see!"

"I verily believe you, Caleb," said Ravenswood, dryly.

Balderston here turned to his master a half-upbraiding, half-imploring countenance, and edged toward him as he repeated, "It was nae great matter of preparation; but just something addled to your honor's ordinary course of fare—*petty cover*, as they say at the Louvre—three courses and the fruit."

"Keep your intolerable nonsense to yourself, you old fool!" said Ravenswood, mortified at his officiousness, yet not knowing how to contradict him, without the risk of giving rise to scenes yet more ridiculous.

Caleb saw his advantage, and resolved to improve it. But first observing that the Lord Keeper's servant entered the apartment and spoke apart with his master, he took the same opportunity to whisper a few words into Ravenswood's ear—"Haud your tongue, for Heaven's sake, sir—if it's my pleasure to hazard my soul in telling lees for the honor of the family, it's nae business o' yours—and if ye let me gang on quietly, I'se be moderate in my banquet; but if ye contradict me, deil but I dress ye a dinner fit for a duke!"

Ravenswood, in fact, thought it would be best to let his officious butler run on, who proceeded to enumerate upon his fingers,—“No muckle provision—might hae served four persons of honor,—first course, capons in white broth—roast kid—bacon with reverence,—second course, roasted leveret—butter crabs—a veal florentine,—third course, black-cock—it's black enough now wi' the sute—plumdamas—a tart—a flam—and some nonsense sweet things, and comfits—and that's a'," he said, seeing the impatience of his master; "that's just a' was o't—forby the apples and pears."

Miss Ashton had by degrees gathered her spirits, so far as to pay some attention to what was going on; and observing the restrained impatience of Ravenswood, contrasted with the peculiar determination of manner with which Caleb detailed his imaginary banquet, the whole struck her as so ridiculous, that, despite every effort to the contrary, she burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, in which she was joined by her father, though with more moderation, and finally by the Master of Ravenswood himself, though conscious that the jest was at his own expense. Their mirth—for a scene which we read with little emotion often appears extremely ludicrous to the spectators—made the old vault ring again. They ceased—they renewed

—they ceased—they renewed again their shouts of laughter! Caleb, in the meantime, stood his ground with a grave, angry, and scornful dignity, which greatly enhanced the ridicule of the scene, and the mirth of the spectators.

At length, when the voices, and nearly the strength of the laughers, were exhausted, he exclaimed, with very little ceremony, “The deil’s in the gentles! they breakfast sae lordly, that the loss of the best dinrer ever cook pat fingers to, makes them as merry as if it were the best jeest in a’ George Buchanan.* If there was a little in your honors’ wames, as there is in Caleb Balderston’s, less caickling wad serve ye on sic a gravaminous subject.”

Caleb’s blunt expression of resentment again awakened the mirth of the company, which, by the way, he regarded not only as an aggression upon the dignity of the family, but a special contempt of the eloquence with which he himself had summed up the extent of their supposed losses;—“a description of a dinner,” as he said afterward to Mysie, “that wad hae made a fu’ man hungry, and them to sit there laughing at it!”

“But,” said Miss Ashton, composing her countenance as well as she could, “are all these delicacies so totally destroyed, that no scrap can be collected?”

“Collected, my leddy! what wad ye collect out of the sute and the ass? Ye may gang down yourself, and look into our kitchen—the cookmaid in the trembling exies—the gude vivers lying a’ about—beef—capons and white broth—florentine and flams—bacon, wi’ reverence, and a’ the sweet confections and whim-whams! ye’ll see them a’, my leddy—that is,” said he, correcting himself, “ye’ll no see ony of them now, for the cook has soopit them up, as was weel her part; but ye’ll see the white broth where it was spilt. I pat my fingers in it, and it tastes as like sour-milk as ony thing else; if that isna the effect of thunner, I kenna what is.—This gentleman here couldna but hear the clash of our haill dishes, china and silver thegither?”

The Lord Keeper’s domestic, though a statesman’s attendant, and of course trained to command his countenance upon all occasions, was somewhat discomposed by this appeal, to which he only answered by a bow.

“I think, Mr. Butler,” said the Lord Keeper, who began to be afraid lest the prolongation of this scene should at length displease Ravenswood,—“I think, that were you to retire with

* [Referring probably to a popular chap-book, entitled “The witty and entertaining Exploits of George Buchanan, who was commonly called the King’s Fool; the whole six parts complete,” 1781. This character was jester to Charles I. and must not be mistaken for his learned namesake.]

my servant Lockhard—he has traveled, and is quite accustomed to accidents and contingencies of every kind, and I hope betwixt you, you may find out some mode of supply at this emergency.”

“His honor kens,”—said Caleb, who, however hopeless of himself of accomplishing what was desirable, would, like the high-spirited elephant, rather have died in the effort than brooked the aid of a brother in commission.—“his honor kens weel I need nae counselor when the honor of the house is concerned.”

“I should be unjust if I denied it, Caleb,” said his master; “but your art lies chiefly in making apologies, upon which we can no more dine, than upon the bill of fare of our thunder-blasted dinner. Now, possibly, Mr. Lockhard’s talent may consist in finding some substitute for that, which certainly is not, and has in all probability never been.”

“Your honor is pleased to be facetious,” said Caleb, “but I am sure, that for the warst, for a walk as far as Wolf’s Hope, I could dine forty men,—no that the folk there deserve your honor’s custom. They hae been ill advised in the matter of the duty-eggs and butter, I winna deny that.”

“Do go consult together,” said the Master; “go down to the village, and do the best you can. We must not let our guests remain without refreshment, to save the honor of a ruined family. And here, Caleb—take my purse; I believe that will prove your best ally.”

“Purse? purse, indeed?” quoth Caleb, indignantly flinging out of the room,—“what suld I do wi’ your honor’s purse, on your ain ground? I trust we are no to pay for our ain?”

The servants left the hall; and the door was no sooner shut, than the Lord Keeper began to apologize for the rudeness of his mirth; and Lucy to hope she had given no pain or offence to the kind-hearted faithful old man.

“Caleb and I must both learn, madam, to undergo with good humor, or at least with patience, the ridicule which everywhere attaches itself to poverty.”

“You do yourself injustice. Master of Ravenswood, on my word of honor,” answered his elder guest. “I believe I know more of your affairs than you do yourself, and I hope to show you that I am interested in them; and that—in short, that your prospects are better than you apprehend. In the meantime, I can conceive nothing so respectable, as the spirit which rises above misfortune, and prefers honorable privations to debt or dependence.”

Whether from fear of offending the delicacy, or awakening

the pride of the Master, the Lord Keeper made these allusions with an appearance of fearful and hesitating reserve, and seemed to be afraid that he was intruding too far, in venturing to touch, however lightly, upon such a topic, even when the Master had led to it. In short, he appeared at once pushed on by his desire of appearing friendly, and held back by the fear of intrusion. It was no wonder that the Master of Ravenswood, little acquainted as he then was with life, should have given this consummate courtier credit for more sincerity than was probably to be found in a score of his cast. He answered, however, with reserve, that he was indebted to all who might think well of him; and, apologizing to his guests, he left the hall, in order to make such arrangements for their entertainment at circumstances admitted.

Upon consulting with old Mysie, the accommodations for the night were easily completed, as indeed they admitted of little choice. The Master surrendered his apartment for the use of Miss Ashton, and Mysie (once a person of consequence), dressed in a black satin gown which had belonged of yore to the Master's grandmother, and had figured in the court-balls of Henrietta Maria, went to attend her as lady's maid. He next inquired after Bucklaw, and understanding he was at the change-house with the huntsmen and some companions, he desired Caleb to call there, and acquaint him how he was circumstanced at Wolf's Crag—to intimate to him that it would be most convenient if he could find a bed in the hamlet, as the elder guest must necessarily be quartered in the secret chamber, the only spare bedroom which could be made fit to receive him. The Master saw no hardship in passing the night by the hall-fire, wrapt in his campaign cloak; and to Scottish domesticities of the day, even of the highest rank, nay, to young men of family or fashion, on any pinch, clean straw, or a dry hay-loft, was always held good night-quarters.

For the rest, Lockhard had his master's orders to bring some venison from the inn, and Caleb was to trust to his wits for the honor of his family. The Master, indeed, a second time held out his purse; but, as it was in sight of the strange servant, the butler thought himself obliged to decline what his fingers itched to clutch. "Couldna he hae slippit it gently into my hand?" said Caleb—"but his honor will never learn how to bear himsell in siccan cases."

Mysie, in the meantime, according to a uniform custom in remote places in Scotland, offered the strangers the produce of her little dairy, "while better meat was getting ready." And, according to another custom, not yet wholly in desuetude, as

the storm was now drifting off to leeward, the Master carried the Keeper to the top of his highest tower to admire a wide and waste extent of view, and to "weary for his dinner."

CHAPTER ELEVENTH.

"Now dame," quoth he, "Je vous dis sans doute,
Had I nought of a capon but the liver,
And of your white bread nought but a shiver,
And after that a roasted pigge's head
(But I ne wold for me no beast were dead),
Then had I with you homely sufferance."

CHAUCER, SUMNER'S TALE

It was not without some secret misgivings that Caleb set out upon his exploratory expedition. In fact, it was attended with a treble difficulty. He dared not tell his master the offence which he had that morning given to Bucklaw (just for the honor of the family)—he dared not acknowledge he had been too hasty in refusing the purse—and, thirdly, he was somewhat apprehensive of unpleasant consequences upon his meeting Hayston, under the impression of an affront, and probably by this time under the influence also of no small quantity of brandy.

Caleb, to do him justice, was as bold as any lion where the honor of the family of Ravenswood was concerned; but his was that considerate valor which does not delight in unnecessary risks. This, however, was a secondary consideration the main point was to veil the indigence of the housekeeping at the castle, and to make good his vaunt of the cheer which his resources could procure, without Lockhard's assistance, and without supplies from his master. This was as prime a point of honor with him, as with the generous elephant with whom we have already compared him, who, being overtaken, broke his skull through the desperate exertions which he made to discharge his duty, when he perceived they were bringing up another to his assistance.

The village which they now approached had frequently afforded the distressed butler resources upon similar emergencies: but his relations with it had been of late much altered.

It was a little hamlet which straggled along the side of a creek formed by the discharge of a small brook into the sea, and was hidden from the castle, to which it had been in former

times an appendage, by the intervention of the shoulder of a hill forming a projecting headland. It was called Wolf's Hope, (*i.e.* Wolf's Haven), and the few inhabitants gained a precarious subsistence by manning two or three fishing-boats in the herring season, and smuggling gin and brandy during the winter months. They paid a kind of hereditary respect to the Lords of Ravenswood; but, in the difficulties of the family, most of the inhabitants of Wolf's Hope had contrived to get feu-rights* to their little possessions, their huts, kail-yards, and rights of common, so that they were emancipated from the chains of feudal dependence, and free from the various exactions with which, under every possible pretext, or without any pretext at all, the Scottish landlords of the period, themselves in great poverty, were wont to harass their still poorer tenants at will. They might be, on the whole, termed independent, a circumstance peculiarly galling to Caleb, who had been wont to exercise over them the same sweeping authority in levying contributions which was exercised in former times in England, when "the royal purveyors, sallying forth from under the Gothic portcullis to purchase provisions with power and prerogative instead of money, brought home the plunder of a hundred markets, and all that could be seized from a flying and hiding country and deposited their spoil in a hundred caverns."†

Caleb loved the memory and resented the downfall of that authority, which mimicked, on a petty scale, the grand contributions exacted by the feudal sovereigns. And as he fondly flattered himself that the awful rule and right supremacy which assigned to the Barons of Ravenswood the first and most effective interest in all productions of nature within five miles of their castle, only slumbered, and was not departed forever, he used every now and then to give the recollection of the inhabitants a little jog by some petty exaction. These were at first submitted to, with more or less readiness, by the inhabitants of the hamlet; for they had been so long used to consider the wants of the Baron and his family as having a title to be preferred to their own that their actual independence did not convey to them an immediate sense of freedom. They resembled a man that has been long fettered, who, even at liberty, feels in imagination the grasp of the handcuffs still binding his wrists. But the exercise of freedom is quickly followed with the natural consciousness of its immunities, as an enlarged prisoner, by the free use

* That is, absolute rights of property for the payment of a sum annually.
 † which is usually a trifle in such cases as are alluded to in the text.

† Burke's Speech on Economical Reform.—*Works*, vol. iii. p. 250.

of his limbs, soon dispels the cramped feeling they had acquired when bound.

The inhabitants of Wolf's Hope began to grumble, to resist, and at length positively to refuse compliance with the exactions of Caleb Balderston. It was in vain he reminded them, that when the eleventh Lord Ravenswood, called the Skipper, from his delight in naval matters, had encouraged the trade of their port by building the pier (a bulwark of stones rudely piled together), which protected the fishing-boats from the weather, it had been matter of understanding, that he was to have the first stone of butter after the calving of every cow within the barony, and the first egg, thence called the Monday's egg, laid by every hen on every Monday in the year.

The feuars heard and scratched their heads, coughed, sneezed, and being pressed for answer, rejoined with one voice, "They could not say;"—the universal refuge of a Scottish peasant, when pressed to admit a claim which his conscience owns, or perhaps his feelings, and his interest inclines him to deny.

Caleb, however, furnished the notables of Wolf's Hope with a note of the requisition of butter and eggs, which he claimed as arrears of the aforesaid subsidy, or kindly aid, payable as above mentioned; and having intimated that he would not be averse to compound the same for goods or money, if it was inconvenient to them to pay in kind, left them, as he hoped, to debate the mode of assessing themselves for that purpose. On the contrary, they met with a determined purpose of resisting the exaction, and were only undecided as to the mode of grounding their opposition, when the cooper, a very important person on a fishing station, and one of the Conscript Fathers of the village, observed, "That their hens had caickled mony a day for the Lords of Ravenswood, and it was time they suld caickle for those that gave them roosts and barley." A unanimous grin intimated the assent of the assembly. "And," continued the orator, "if it's your wull, I'll just tak a step as far as Dunse for Davie Dingwall the writer, that's come frae the North to settle amang us, and he'll pit this job to rights, I'se warrant him."

A day was accordingly fixed for holding a grand *palaver* at Wolf's Hope on the subject of Caleb's requisitions, and he was invited to attend at the hamlet for that purpose.

He went with open hands and empty stomach, trusting to fill the one on his master's account, and the other on his own score, at the expense of the feuars of Wolf's Hope. But, death to his hopes! as he entered the eastern end of the straggling village, the awful form of Davie Dingwall, a sly, dry, hard-

fisted shrewd country attorney, who had already acted against the family of Ravenswood, and was a principal agent of Sir William Ashton, trotted in at the western extremity, bestriding a leathern portmanteau stuffed with the feu-charters of the hamlet, and hoping he had not kept Mr. Balderston waiting, "as he was instructed and fully empowered to pay or receive, compound or compensate, and, in fine, to *agè** as accords, respecting all mutual and unsettled claims whatsoever, belonging or competent to the Honorable Edgar Ravenswood, commonly called the Master of Ravenswood"—

"The *Right Honorable Lord Ravenswood*," said Caleb, with great emphasis; for, though conscious he had little chance of advantage in the conflict to ensue, he was resolved not to sacrifice one jot of honor. "Lord Ravenswood, then," said the man of business: "we shall not quarrel with you about titles of courtesy—commonly called Lord Ravenswood, or Master of Ravenswood, heritable proprietor of the lands and barony of Wolf's Crag, on the one part, and to John Whitefish and others, feuars in the town of Wolf's Hope, within the barony aforesaid, on the other part."

Caleb was conscious, from sad experience, that he would wage a very different strife with this mercenary champion, than with the individual feuars themselves, upon whose old recollections, predilections, and habits of thinking, he might have wrought by a hundred indirect arguments, to which their deputy-representative was totally insensible. The issue of the debate proved the reality of his apprehensions. It was in vain he strained his eloquence and ingenuity, and collected into one mass all arguments arising from antique custom and hereditary respect, from good deeds done by the Lord of Ravenswood to the community of Wolf's Hope in former days, and from what might be expected from them in future. The writer stuck to the contents of his feu-charters—he could not see it—'twas not in the bond. And when Caleb, determined to try what a little spirit would do, deprecated the consequences of Lord Ravenswood's withdrawing his protection from the burgh, and even hinted at his using active measures of resentment, the man of law sneered in his face.

"His clients," he said, "had determined to do the best they could for their own town, and he thought Lord Ravenswood, since he was a lord, might have enough to do to look after his own castle. As to any threats of stouthrief oppression, by rule of thumb, or *via facti*, as the law termed it, he would have

**i. e.* To act as may be necessary and legal : a Scottish law phrase.

Mr. Balderston recollect, that new times were not as old times—that they lived in the south of the Forth, and far from the Highlands—that his clients thought they were able to protect themselves; but should they find themselves mistaken, they would apply to the government for the protection of a corporal and four red-coats, 'who,' said Mr. Dingwall, with a grin, "would be perfectly able to secure them against Lord Ravenswood, and all that he or his followers could do by the strong hand."

If Caleb could have concentrated all the lightnings of aristocracy in his eye, to have struck dead this contemner of allegiance and privilege, he would have launched them at his head, without respect to the consequences. As it was, he was compelled to turn his course backward to the castle; and there he remained for full half-a-day invisible and inaccessible even to Mysie, sequestered in his own peculiar dungeon, where he sat burnishing a single pewter-plate, and whistling "Maggie Lauder" six hours without intermisson.

The issue of this unfortunate requisition had shut against Caleb all resources which could be derived from Wolf's Hope and its purlieus, the El Dorado, or Peru, from which, in all former cases of exigence, he had been able to extract some assistance. He had, indeed, in a manner, vowed that the deil should have him, if ever he put the print of his foot within its causeway again. He had hitherto kept his word; and, strange to tell, this secession had, as he intended in some degree, the effect of a punishment upon the refractory feuars. Mr Balderston had been a person in their eyes connected with a superior order of beings, whose presence used to grace their little festivities, whose advice they found useful on many occasions, and whose communications gave a sort of credit to their village. The place, they acknowledged, "didna look as it used to do, and should do, since Mr. Caleb keepit the castle sae closely—but, doubtless, touching the eggs and butter, it was a most unreasonable demand, as Mr. Dingwall had justly made manifest."

Thus stood matters betwixt the parties, when the old butler, though it was gall and wormwood to him, found himself obliged either to acknowledge before a strange man of quality, and, what was much worse, before that stranger's servant, the total inability of Wolf's Crag to produce a dinner, or he must trust to the compassion of the feuars of Wolf's Hope. It was a dreadful degradation, but necessity was equally imperious and lawless. With these feelings he entered the streets of the village.

Willing to shake himself from his companion as soon as

possible, he directed Mr. Lockhard to Luckie Sma'trash's change-house, where a din, proceeding from the revels of Bucklaw, Craigenfelt, and their party, sounded half-way down the street, while the red glare from the window overpowered the gray twilight which was now settling down, and glimmered against a parcel of old tubs, kegs, and barrels, piled up in the cooper's yard, on the other side of the way.

"If you, Mr. Lockhard," said the old butler to his companion, "will be pleased to step to the change-house where that light comes from, and where, as I judge, they are now singing 'Cauld Kail in Aberdeen,' ye may do your master's errand about the venison, and I will do mine about Bucklaw's bed, as I return frae getting the rest of the vivers.—It's no that the venison is actually needfu'," he added, detaining his colleague by the button, "to make up the dinner; but, as a compliment to the hunters, ye ken—and, Mr. Lockhard—if they offer ye a drink o' yill, or a cup o' wine, or a glass o' brandy, ye'll be a wise man to take it, in case the thunner should hae soured ours at the castle—whilk is ower muckle to be dreaded."

He then permitted Lockhard to depart; and with foot heavy as lead, and yet far lighter than his heart, stepped on through the unequal street of the straggling village, meditating on whom he ought to make his first attack. It was necessary he should find some one, with whom old acknowledged greatness should weigh more than recent independence, and to whom his application might appear an act of high dignity, relenting at once and soothing. But he could not recollect an inhabitant of a mind so constructed. "Our kail is like to be cauld enough too," he reflected, as the chorus of "Cauld Kail in Aberdeen" again reached his ears. The minister—he had got his presentation from the late lord, but they had quarreled about teinds:—the brewster's wife—she had trusted long—and the bill was aye scored up—and unless the dignity of the family should actually require it, it would be a sin to distress a widow woman. None was so able—but, on the other hand, none was likely to be less willing, to stand his friend upon the present occasion, than Gibbie Girder, the man of tubs and barrels already mentioned, who had headed the insurrection in the matter of the egg and butter subsidy.—"But a' comes o' taking folk on the right side, I trow," quoth Caleb to himself; "and I had ance the ill hap to say he was but a Johnny Newcome in our town, and the carle bore the family an ill will ever since. But he married a bonny young queen, Jean Lightbody, auld Lightbody's daughter, him that was in the steading of Loup—the Dyke,—and auld Lightbody was married himself to Marion,

that was about my lady in the family forty years syne—I hae had mony a day's daffing wi' Jean's mither, and they say she bides on wi' them—the carle has Jacobuses and Georgiuses baith, an ane could get at them—and sure I am, it's doing him an honor him or his never deserved at our hand, the ungracious sump; and if he loses by us a'thegither, he is e'en cheap o't, he can spare it brawly."

Shaking off irresolution, therefore, and turning at once upon his heel, Caleb walked hastily back to the cooper's house, lifted the latch without ceremony, and in a moment found himself behind the *hallan*, or partition, from which position he could, himself unseen, reconnoitre the interior of the *but*, or kitchen apartment, of the mansion.

Reverse of the sad menage at the Castle of Wolf's Crag, a bickering fire roared up the cooper's chimney. His wife on the one side, in her pearlings and pudding sleeves, put the last finishing touch to her holiday's apparel while she contemplated a very handsome and good-humored face in a broken mirror, raised upon the *bink* (the shelves on which the plates are disposed) for her special accommodation. Her mother, old Luckie Loup-the-Dyke, "a canty carline," as was within twenty miles of her, according to the unanimous report of the *cummers*, or gossips, sat by the fire in the full glory of a grogam gown, lammer beads, and a clean cockernony, whiffing a snug pipe of tobacco, and superintending the affairs of the kitchen. For—sight more interesting to the anxious heart and craving entrails of the desponding seneschal, than either buxom dame or canty cummer—there bubbled on the aforesaid bickering fire a huge pot, or rather cauldron, steaming with beef and brewis; while before it revolved two spits, turned each by one of the cooper's apprentices, seated in the opposite corners of the chimney; the one loaded with a quarter of mutton, while the other was graced with a fat goose and a beace of wild ducks. The sight and the scent of such a land of plenty almost wholly overcame the drooping spirits of Caleb. He turned, for a moment's space, to reconnoitre the *ben*, or parlor end of the house, and there saw a sight scarce less affecting to his feelings,—a large round table, covered for ten or twelve persons, *decoral* (according to his own favorite term) with *napery* as white as snow; grand flagons of pewter, intermixed with one or two silver cups, containing, as was probable, something worthy the brilliancy of their outward appearance; clean trenchers, cutty spoons, knives and forks, sharp, burnished, and prompt for action, which lay all displayed as for an especial festival.

"The devil's in the pedling tub-coopering carle!" mut-

tered Caleb, in all the envy of astonishment ; “ it’s a shame to see the like o’ them gusting their gabs at sic a rate. But if some o’ that gude cheer does not find its way to Wolf’s Crag this night, my name is not Caleb Balderston.”

So resolving, he entered the apartment, and, in all courteous greeting, saluted both the mother and the daughter. Wolf’s Crag was the court of the barony, Caleb prime minister at Wolf’s Crag ; and it has ever been remarked, that though the masculine subject who pays the taxes sometimes growls at the courtiers by whom they are imposed, the said courtiers continue, nevertheless, welcome to the fair sex, to whom they furnish the newest small talk and the earliest fashions. Both the dames were, therefore, at once about Old Caleb’s neck, setting up their throats together by way of welcome.

“ Ay, sirs, Mr. Balderston, and is this you ?—A sight of you is gude for sair een—sit down—sit down—the gudeman will be blithe to see you—ye nar saw him sae cadgy in your life ; but we are to christen our bit wean the night, as ye will hae heard, and doubtless ye will stay and see the ordinance.—We hae killed a wether, and ane o’ our lads has been out wi’ his gun at the moss—ye used to like wild-fowl.”

“ Na—na—gudewife,” said Caleb, “ I just keekit in to wish ye joy, and I wad be glad to hae spoken wi’ the gudeman, but ”——moving, as if to go away.

“ The ne’er a fit ye’s gang,” said the elder dame, laughing, and holding him fast, with a freedom which belonged to their old acquaintance ; “ wha kens what ill it may bring to the bairn, if ye owerlook it in that gate ? ”

“ But I’m in a preceese hurry, gudewife,” said the butler, suffering himself to be dragged to a seat without much resistance ; “ and as to eating ”——for he observed the mistress of the dwelling bustling about to place a trencher for him——“ as for eating—lack-a-day, we are just killed up yonder wi’ eating frae morning to night—it’s shamefu’ epicurism ; but that’s what we hae gotten frae the English pock-puddings.”

“ Hout—never mind the English pock-puddings,” said Luckie Lightbody ; “ try our puddings, Mr. Balderston—there is black pudding and white-hass—try whilk ye like best.”

“ Baith gude—baith excellent—canna be better ; but the very smell is enugh for me that hae dined sae lately (the faithful wretch had fasted since day-break). But I wadna affront your housewifeskep, gudewife ; and, with your permission, I’ve e’en pit them in my napkin, and eat them to my supper at e’en, for I’m wearied of Mysie’s pastry and nonsense—ye ken landward dainties aye pleased me best, Marion—and

landward lasses too—(looking at the cooper's wife)—*Ne'er a bit but she looks far better than when she married Gilbert, and then she was the bonniest lass in our parochine and the neest till't—But gawsie cow, goodly calf.*

The women smiled at the compliment each to herself, and they smiled again to each other as Caleb wrapt up the puddings in a towel which he had brought with him, as a dragoon carries his foraging bag to receive what may fall in his way.

“And what news at the castle?” quo' the gudewife.

“News?—the bravest news ye ever heard—the Lord Keeper's up yonder wi' his fair daughter, just ready to fling her at my lord's head, if he winna tak her out o' his arms; and I'se warrant he'll stitch our auld lands of Ravenswood to her petticoat tail.”

“Eh! sirs—ay!—and will he hae her?—and is she weel favored?—and what's the color o' her hair?—and does she wear a habit or a raily?” were the questions which the females showered upon the butler.

“Hout tout!—it wad tak a man a day to answer a' your questions, and I hae hardly a minute. Where's the gudeman?”

“Awa to fetch the minister,” said Mrs. Girder, “precious Mr. Peter Bide-the-Bent, frae the Moss-head—the honest man has the rheumatism wi' lying in the hills in the persecution.”

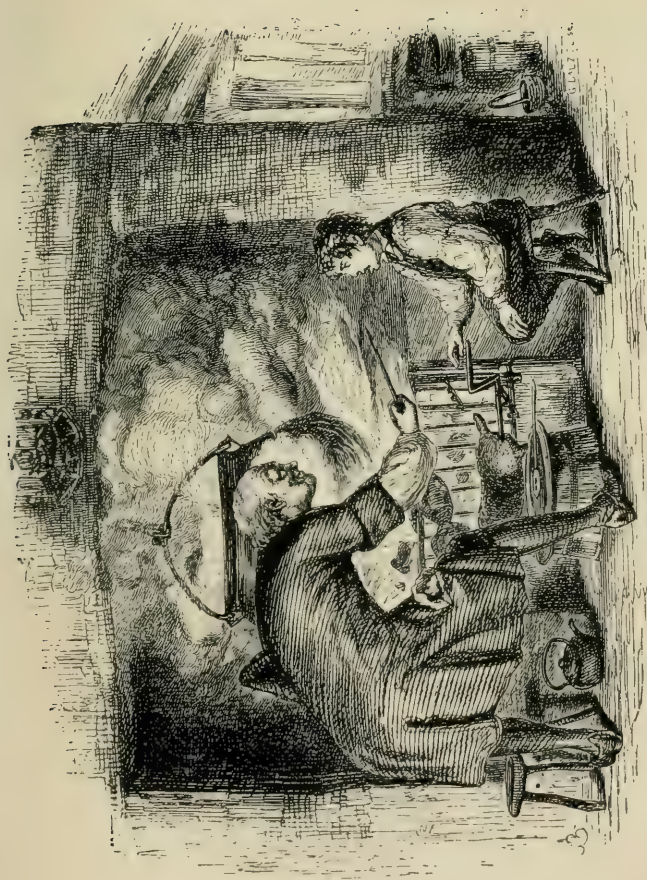
“Ay!—a whig and a mountain man—nae less?” said Caleb, with a peevishness he could not suppress: “I hae seen the day, Luckie, when worthy Mr. Cuffcushion and the service-book would hae served your turn (to the elder dame), or ony honest woman in like circumstances.”

“And that's true too,” said Mrs. Lightbody, “but what can a body do?—Jean maun baith sing her psalms and busk her cockernony the gate the gudeman likes, and nae ither gate; for he's maister and mair at hame, I can tell ye, Mr. Balderston.”

“Ay, ay, and does he guide the gear too?” said Caleb, to whose projects masculine rule boded little good.

“Ilka penny on't—but he'll dress her as dink as a daisy, as ye see—sae she has little reason to complain—where there's ane better aff there's ten waur.”

“Aweel, gudewife,” said Caleb, crestfallen, but not beaten off, that wasna the way ye guided your gudeman; but ilka land has its ain lauch. I maun be ganging—I just wanted to round in the gudeman's lug, that I heard them say up by yonder, that Peter Puncheon that was cooper to the Queen's stores at the Timmer Burse at Leith, is dead — sae I thought that maybe



CALEB MAKING OFF WITH THE FOWL

a word frae my lord to the Lord Keeper might hae served Gilbert; but since he's frae hame"—

"O, but ye maun stay his hame-coming," said the dame; "I aye tell'd the gudeman ye meant weel to him; but he taks the tout at every bit lippening word."

"Aweel, I'll stay the last minute I can."

"And so," said the handsome young spouse of Mr. Girder, "ye think this Miss Ashton is weel-favored?—troth, and sae should she, to set up for our young lord, with a face, and a hand, and a seat on his horse, that might become a king's son,—d'ye ken that he aye glowers up at my window, Mr. Balderston, when he chances to ride thro' the town, sae I hae a right to ken what like he is, as weel as ony body."

"I ken that brawly," said Caleb, "for I hae heard his lordship say, the cooper's wife had the blackest ee in the barony; and I said, Weel may that be, my lord, for it was her mither's afore her, as I ken to my cost—Eh, Marion? Ha, ha, ha!—Ah! these were merry days!"

"Hout awa, auld carle," said the old dame, "to speak sic daffin to young folk.—But, Jean—fie, woman, dinna ye hear the bairn greet? I'se warrant it's that dreary weid* has come over't again."

Up got mother and grandmother, and scoured away, jostling each other as they ran, into some remote corner of the tenement, where the young hero of the evening was deposited. When Caleb saw the coast fairly clear, he took an invigorating pinch of snuff, to sharpen and confirm his resolution.

Could be my cast, thought he, if either Bide-the-Bent or Girder taste that broche of wild-fowl this evening; and then addressing the eldest turnspit, a boy about eleven years old, and putting a penny into his hand, he said, "Here is twa! pennies,† my man; carry that ower to Mrs. Sma'trash, and bid her fill my mull wi' sneeshin, and I'll turn the broche for ye in the meantime—and she will gie ye a gingerbread snap for your pains."

No sooner was the elder boy departed on this mission, than Caleb, looking the remaining turnspit gravely and steadily in the face, removed from the fire the spit bearing the wild-fowl of which he had undertaken the charge, clapped his hat on his head, and fairly marched off with it. He stopped at the door of the change-house only to say, in a few brief words, that Mr.

* *Wied*, a feverish cold; a disorder incident to infants and to females, is so called.

† *Monetæ Scoticæ, scilicet.*

Haystone of Bucklaw was not to expect a bed that evening in the castle.

If this message was too briefly delivered by Caleb, it became absolute rudeness when conveyed through the medium of a suburb landlady: and Bucklaw was, as a more calm and temperate man might have been, highly incensed. Captain Craigenfelt proposed, with the unanimous applause of all present, that they should course the old fox (meaning Caleb) ere he got to cover, *and toss him in a blanket*. But Lockhard intimated to his master's servants, and those of Lord Bittlebrains, in a tone of authority, that the slightest impertinence to the Master of Ravenswood's domestic would give Sir William Ashton the highest offence. And having so said, in a manner sufficient to prevent any aggression on their part, he left the public-house, taking along with him two servants loaded with such provisions as he had been able to procure, and overtook Caleb just when he had cleared the village.

CHAPTER TWELFTH.

Should I take ought of you?—'tis true I begged now;
And, what is worse than that, I stole a kindness;
And, what is worst of all, I lost my way in't.

WIT WITHOUT MONEY.

THE face of the little boy, sole witness of Caleb's infringement upon the laws at once of property and hospitality, would have made a good picture. He sat motionless, as if he had witnessed some of the spectral appearances which he had heard told of in a winter's evening; and as he forgot his own duty, and allowed his spit to stand still, he added to the misfortunes of the evening, by suffering the mutton to burn as black as coal. He was first recalled from his trance of astonishment by a hearty cuff, administered by *Dame Lightbody*, who (in whatever other respects she might conform her name) was a woman strong of person, and expert in the use of her hands, as some say her deceased husband had known to his cost.

"What garr'd ye let the roast burn, ye ill-cleckit gude-for-naught?"

"I dinna ken," said the boy.

"And where's that ill-deedy gett, Giles?"

"I dinna ken," blubbered the astonished declarant.

"And where's Mr. Balderston?—and abune a', and in the

name of council and kirk-session, that I suld say sae, where's the broche wi' the wild-fowl?"

As Mrs. Girder here entered, and joined her mother's exclamations, screaming into one ear while the old lady deafened the other, they succeeded in so utterly confounding the unhappy urchin, that he could not for some time tell his story at all, and it was only when the elder boy returned, that the truth began to dawn on their minds.

"Weel, sirs!" said Mrs. Lightbody, "wha wad hae thought o' Caleb Balderston playing an auld acquaintance sic a pliskie?"

"O, weary on him!" said the spouse of Mr. Girder; "and what am I to say to the gudeman?—he'll brain me, if there wasna anither woman in a' Wolf's Hope."

"Hout tout, silly quean," said the mother; "na, na—it's come to muckle, but it's no come to that neither; for an he brain you he maun brain me, and I have garr'd his betters stand back—hands aff is fair play—we maunna heed a bit flyting."

The tramp of horses now announced the arrival of the cooper, with the minister. They had no sooner dismounted than they made for the kitchen fire, for the evening was cool after the thunderstorm, and the woods wet and dirty. The young gude-wife, strong in the charms of her Sunday gown and biggonets, threw herself in the way of receiving the first attack, while her mother, like the veteran division of the Roman legion, remained in the rear, ready to support her in case of necessity. Both hoped to protract the discovery of what had happened—the mother, by interposing her bustling person betwixt Mr. Girder and the fire, and the daughter by the extreme cordiality with which she received the minister and her husband, and the anxious fears which she expressed lest they should have "gotten cauld."

"Cauld?" quoth the husband surlily—for he was not of that class of lords and masters whose wives are viceroys over them—"we'll be cauld eneugh, I think, if ye dinna let us in to the fire."

And so saying, he burst his way through both lines of defence; and, as he had a careful eye over his property of every kind, he perceived at one glance the absence of the spit with its savory burden. "What the deil, woman"——

"Fie for shame!" exclaimed both the women; "and before Mr. Bide-the-bent!"

"I stand reproved," said the cooper; "but"——

"The taking in our mouths the name of the great enemy of our souls," said Mr. Bide-the-Bent——

"I stand reproved," said the cooper.

"Is an exposing ourselfs to his temptations," continued the reverend monitor, "and an inviting, or in some sort, a compelling, of him to lay aside his other trafficking with unhappy persons, and wait upon those in whose speech his name is frequent."

"Weel, weel, Mr. Bide-the-Bent, can a man do mair than stand reproved?" said the cooper; "but just let me ask the women what for they hae dished the wild-fowl before we came."

"They arena dished, Gilbert," said his wife; "but—but an accident"——

"What accident?" said Girder, with flashing eyes—"Nae ill come ower them, I trust? Uh?"

His wife who stood much in awe of him, durst not reply; but her mother bustled up to her support, with arms disposed as if they were about to be a-kinbo at the next reply;—"I gied them to an acquaintance of mine, Gibbie Girder; and what about it now?"

Her excess of assurance struck Girder mute for an instant. "And ye gied the wild-fowl, the best end of our christening dinner, to a friend of yours, ye auld rudas! And what might *his* name be, I pray ye?"

"Just worthy Mr. Caleb Balderston frae Wolf's Crag," answered Marion, prompt and prepared for battle.

Girder's wrath foamed over all restraint. If there was a circumstance which could have added to the resentment he felt, it was, that this extravagant donation had been made in favor of our friend Caleb, toward whom, for reasons to which the reader is no stranger, he nourished a decided resentment. He raised his riding-wand against the elder matron, but she stood firm, collected in herself, and undauntedly brandished the iron ladle with which she had just been *flaming* (*Anglicè*, basting) the roast of mutton. Her weapon was certainly the better, and her arm not the weakest of the two; so that Gilbert thought it safest to turn short off upon his wife, who had by this time hatched a sort of hysterical whine, which greatly moved the minister, who was in fact as simple and kind-hearted a creature as ever breathed.—"And you, ye throwless jaud, to sit still and see my substance disposed upon to an idle, drunken, reprobate, worm-eaten, serving man, just because he kittles the lugs o' a silly auld wife wi' useless clavers, and every twa words a lee?—I'll gar you as gude"——

Here the minister interposed, both by voice and action while Dame Lightbody threw herself in front of her daughter and flourished her ladle.

"Am I no to chastise my ain wife?" exclaimed the cooper, very indignantly.

"Ye may chastise your ain wife if you like," answered Dame Lightbody; "but ye shall never lay finger on my daughter, and that ye may found upon."

"For shame, Mr. Girder!" said the clergyman; "this is what I little expected to have seen of you, that you suld give rein to your sinful passions against your nearest and your dearest; and this night too, when ye are called to the most solemn duty of a Christian parent—and a' for what? for a redundancy of creature-comforts, as worthless as they are unneedful."

"Worthless!" exclaimed the cooper; "a better guse never walkit on stubble; twa finer dentier wild-ducks never wat a feather."

"Be it sae, neighbor," rejoined the minister; "but see what superfluities are yet revolving before your fire. I have seen the day when ten of the bannocks which stand upon that board would have been an acceptable dainty to as many men, that were starving on hills and bogs, and in caves of the earth, for the Gospel's sake."

"And that's what vexes me maist of a'," said the cooper, anxious to get some one to sympathize with his not altogether causeless anger; "an the queen had gien it to ony suffering sant, or to ony body ava but that reiving, lying, oppressing Tory villain, that rade in the wicked troop of militia when it was commanded out against the sants at Bothwell Brigg by the auld tyrant Allan Ravenswood, that is gane to his place, I wad the less hae minded it. But to gie the principal part o' the feast to the like o' him!"——

"Aweel, Gilbert," said the minister, "and dinna ye see a high judgment in this?—The seed of the righteous are not seen begging their bread—think of the son of a powerful oppressor being brought to the pass of supporting his household from your fullness."

"And, besides," said the wife, "it wasna for Lord Ravenswood neither, an he wad hear but a body speak—it was to help to entertain the Lord Keeper, as they ca' him, that's up yonder at Wolf's Crag."

"Sir William Ashton at Wolf's Crag!" ejaculated the astonished man of hoops and staves.

"And hand and glove wi' Lord Ravenswood," added Dame Lightbody.

"Doited idiot!—that auld clavering sneckdrawer wad gar ye trow the moon is made of green cheese. The Lord Keeper and Ravenswood! they are cat and dog, hare and hound."

"I tell ye they are man and wife, and gree better than some others that are sae," retorted the mother-in-law ; "forby, Peter Puncheon, that's cooper to the Queen's stores, is dead, and the place is to fill, and"—

"Od guide us, wull ye haud your skirling tongues?" said Girder,—for we are to remark, that this explanation was given like a catch for two voices, the younger dame, much encouraged by the turn of the debate, taking up, and repeating in a higher tone, the words as fast as they were uttered by her mother.

"The gudewife says naething but what's true, master," said Girder's foreman, who had come in during the fray. "I saw the Lord Keeper's servants drinking and driving ower at Luckie Sma'trash's ower by yonder."

"And is their maister up at Wolf's Crag?" said Girder.

"Ay, troth is he," replied his man of confidence.

"And friends wi' Ravenswood?"

"It's like sae," answered the foreman, "since he is putting up* wi' him."

"And Peter Puncheon's dead?"

"Ay, ay—Puncheon has leaked out at last, the auld carle," said the foreman; "mony a dribble o' brandy has gaen through him in his day. But as for the broche and the wild-fowl, the saddle's no aff your mare yet, maister, and I could follow and bring it back, for Mr. Balderston's no far aff the town yet."

"Do sae, Will—and come here—I'll tell ye what to do when ye owertake him."

He relieved the females of his presence, and gave Will his private instructions.

"A bonny-like thing," said the mother-in-law, as the cooper re-entered the apartment, "to send the innocent lad after an armed man, when ye ken Mr. Balderston aye wears a rapier, and whiles a dirk into the bargain."

"I trust," said the minister, "ye have reflected weel on what ye have done, lest you should minister cause of strife, of which it is my duty to say, he who affordeth matter, albeit he himself striketh not, is in no manner guiltless,"

"Never fash your beard, Mr. Bide-the-Bent," replied Girder; "ane canna get their breath out between wives and ministers—I ken best how to turn my ain cake.—Jean, serve up the dinner, and nae mair about it."

Nor did he again allude to the deficiency in the course of the evening.

Meantime, the foreman, mounted on his master's steed, and

* Taking up his abode.

charged with his special orders, pricked swiftly forth in pursuit of the marauder, Caleb. That personage, it may be imagined, did not linger by the way. He intermitted even his dearly-beloved chatter, for the purpose of making more haste, only assuring Mr. Lockhard that he had made the purveyor's wife give the wild-fowl a few turns before the fire, in case that Mysie, who had been so much alarmed by the thunder, should not have her kitchen-grate in full splendor. Meanwhile, alleging the necessity of being at Wolf's Crag as soon as possible, he pushed on so fast that his companions could scarce keep up with him. He began already to think he was safe from pursuit, having gained the summit of the swelling eminence which divides Wolf's Crag from the village, when he heard the distant tread of a horse, and a voice which shouted at intervals, "Mr. Caleb—Mr. Balderston—Mr. Caleb Balderston—hollo—bide a wee!"

Caleb, it may be well believed, was in no hurry to acknowledge the summons. First, he would not hear it, and faced his companions down, that it was the echo of the wind; then he said it was not worth stopping for; and, at length, halting reluctantly, as the figure of the horseman appeared through the shades of the evening, he bent up his whole soul to the task of defending his prey, threw himself into an attitude of dignity, advanced the spit, which in his grasp might with its burden seem both spear and shield, and firmly resolved to die rather than surrender it.

What was his astonishment, when the cooper's foreman, riding up and addressing him with respect, told him "his master was very sorry he was absent when he came to his dwelling, and grieved that he could not tarry the christening dinner; and that he had taen the freedom to send a sma' rundlet of sack, and ane anker of brandy, as he understood there were guests at the castle, and that they were short of preparation."

I have heard somewhere a story of an elderly gentleman who was pursued by a bear that had gotten loose from its muzzle, until completely exhausted. In a fit of desperation he faced round upon Bruin and lifted his cane; at the sight of which the instinct of discipline prevailed and the animal, instead of tearing him to pieces, rose up upon his hind legs, and instantly began to shuffle a saraband. Not less than the joyful surprise of the senior, who had supposed himself in the extremity of peril from which he was thus unexpectedly relieved, was that of our excellent friend, Caleb, when he found the pursuer intended to add to his prize, instead of bereaving him of it. He recovered his attitude, however, instantly, so soon as the foreman, stooping from his nag, where he sat

perched betwixt the two barrels, whispered in his ear,—“ If ony thing about Peter Puncheon’s place could be airted their way, John Girder wad mak it better to the Master of Ravenswood than a pair of new gloves ; and that he wad be blithe to speak wi’ Maister Balderston on that head, and he wad find him as pliant as a hoop-willow in a’ that he could wish of him.”

Caleb heard all this without rendering any answer, except that of all great men from Louis XIV. downward, namely, “ We will see about it ; ” and then added aloud, for the edification of Mr. Lockhard,—“ Your master has acted with becoming civility and attention in forwarding the liquors, and I will not fail to represent it properly to my Lord Ravenswood. And, my lad,” he said, “ you may ride on to the castle, and if none of the servants are returned, whilk is to be dreaded, as they make day and night of it when they are out of sight, ye may put them into the porter’s lodge, whilk is on the right hand of the great entry—the porter has got leave to go to see his friends, sae ye will meet no ane to steer ye.”

The foreman, having received his orders, rode on ; and having deposited the casks in the deserted and ruinous porter’s lodge, he returned unquestioned by any one. Having thus executed his master’s commission, and doffed his bonnet to Caleb and his company as he repassed them in his way to the village, he returned to have his share of the christening festivity.*

CHAPTER THIRTEENTH.

As, to the autumn breeze’s bugle sound,
 Various and vague the dry leaves dance their round ;
 Or, from the garden-door, on ether borne,
 The chaff flies devious from the winnow’d corn ;
 So vague, so devious, at the breath of heaven,
 From their fix’d aim are mortal counsels driv’n.

ANONYMOUS.

WE left Caleb Balderston in the extremity of triumph at the success of his various achievements for the honor of the house of Ravenswood. When he had mustered and marshaled his dishes of divers kinds, a more royal provision had not been seen in Wolf’s Crag since the funeral feast of its deceased lord.

* Note E. The raid of Caleb Balderston.

Great was the glory of the serving-man, as he *decorated* the old oaken table cloth with a clean cloth, and arranged upon it carbonaded venison and roasted wild-fowl, with a glance, every now and then, as if to upbraid the incredulity of his master and his guests; and with many a story, more or less true, was Lockhard that evening regaled concerning the ancient grandeur of Wolf's Crag, and the sway of its Barons over the country in their neighborhood.

"A vassal scarce held a calf or a lamb his ain, till he had first asked if the Lord of Ravenswood was pleased to accept it; and they were obliged to ask the lord's consent before they married in these days, and mony a merry tale they tell about that right as weel as others. And although," said Caleb, "these times are not like the gude auld times, when authority had its right, yet true it is, Mr. Lockhard, and you yoursell may partly have remarked, that we of the house of Ravenswood do our endeavor in keeping up, by all just and lawful exertion of our baronial authority, that due and fitting connection betwixt superior and vassal, whilk is in some danger of falling into desuetude, owing to the general license and misrule of these present unhappy times."

"Umph!" said Mr. Lockhard; "and, if I may inquire, Mr. Balderston, pray do you find your people at the village yonder amenable? for I must needs say, that at Ravenswood Castle, now pertaining to my master, the Lord Keeper, ye have not left behind ye the most compliant set of tenantry."

"Ah! but, Mr. Lockhard," replied Caleb, "ye must consider there has been a change of hands, and the auld lord might expect twa turns frae them, when the new comer canna get ane. A dour and fractious set they were, thae tenants of Ravenswood, and ill to live wi' when they dinna ken their master—and if your master put them mad ance, the whole country will not put them down."

"Troth," said Mr. Lockhard, "and such be the case I think the wisest thing for us a' wad be to hammer up a match between your young lord and our winsome young ledly up by there; and Sir William might just stitch your old barony to her gown-sleeve, and he wad sune cuittle* another out o' somebody else, sic a lang head as he has."

Caleb shook his head.—"I wish," he said, "I wish that may answer, Mr. Lockhard. There are auld prophecies about this house I wad like ill to see fulfilled wi' my auld e'en, that has seen evil eneugh already."

* *Cuittle* may answer to the elegant modern phrase *diddle*.

"Pshaw ! never mind freits," said his brother butler ; "if the young folk liked ane anither, they wad make a winsome couple. But, to say truth, there is a leddy sits in our hall-neuk, maun have her hand in that as well as in every other job. But there's no harm in drinking to their healths, and I will fill Mrs. Mysie a cup of Mr. Girder's Canary."

While they thus enjoyed themselves in the kitchen, the company in the hall were not less pleasantly engaged. So soon as Ravenswood had determined upon giving the Lord Keeper such hospitality as he had to offer, he deemed it incumbent on him to assume the open and courteous brow of a well-pleased host. It has been often remarked, that when a man commences by acting a character, he frequently ends by adopting it in good earnest. In the course of an hour or two, Ravenswood, to his own surprise, found himself in the situation of one who frankly does his best to entertain welcome and honored guests. How much of this change in his disposition was to be ascribed to the beauty and simplicity of Miss Ashton, to the readiness with which she accommodated herself to the inconveniencies of her situation—how much to the smooth and plausible conversation of the Lord Keeper, remarkably gifted with those words which win the ear, must be left to the reader's ingenuity to conjecture. But Ravenswood was insensible to neither.

The Lord Keeper was a veteran statesman, well acquainted with courts and cabinets, and intimate with all the various turns of public affairs during the last eventful years of the seventeenth century. He could talk, from his own knowledge, of men and events, in a way which failed not to win attention, and had the peculiar art, while he never said a word which committed himself, at the same time, to persuade the hearer that he was speaking without the least shadow of scrupulous caution or reserve. Ravenswood, in spite of his prejudices, and real grounds of resentment, felt himself at once amused and instructed in listening to him, while the statesman, whose inward feelings had at first so much impeded his efforts to make himself known, had now regained all the ease and fluency of a silver-tongued lawyer of the very highest order.

His daughter did not speak much, but she smiled ; and what she did say argued a submissive gentleness, and a desire to give pleasure, which, to a proud man like Ravenswood, was more fascinating than the most brilliant wit. Above all, he could not but observe that, whether from gratitude, or from some other motive, he himself, in his deserted and unprovided hall, was as much the object of respectful attention to his guests, as he would have been when surrounded by all the

appliances and means of hospitality proper to his high birth. All deficiencies passed unobserved, or if they did not escape notice, it was to praise the substitutes which Caleb had contrived to supply the want of the usual accommodations. Where a smile was unavoidable, it was a very good-humored one, and often coupled with some well-turned compliment, to show how much the guests esteemed the merits of their noble host, how little they thought of the inconveniencies with which they were surrounded. I am not sure whether the pride of being found to outbalance, in virtue of his own personal merit, all the disadvantages of fortune, did not make as favorable an impression upon the haughty heart of the Master of Ravenswood, as the conversation of the father and the beauty of Lucy Ashton.

The hour of repose arrived. The Keeper and his daughter retired to their apartments, which were "decorated" more properly than could have been anticipated. In making the necessary arrangements, Mysie had indeed enjoyed the assistance of a gossip who had arrived from the village upon an exploratory expedition, but had been arrested by Caleb, and impressed into the domestic drudgery of the evening. So that, instead of returning home to describe the dress and person of the grand young lady, she found herself compelled to be active in the domestic economy of Wolf's Crag.

According to the custom of the time, the Master of Ravenswood attended the Lord Keeper to his apartment, followed by Caleb, who placed on the table, with all the ceremonials due to torches of wax, two rudely-framed tallow-candles, such as in those days were only used by the peasantry, hooped in paltry clasps of wire, which served for candlesticks. He then disappeared, and presently entered with two earthen flagons (the china, he said, had been little used since my lady's time), one filled with Canary wine, the other with brandy.* The Canary sack, unheeding all probabilities of detection, he declared had been twenty years in the cellars of Wolf's Crag, "though it was not for him to speak before their honors; the brandy—it was weel-kend liquor, as mild as mead, and as strong as Samson—it had been in the house ever since the memorable revel, in which auld Micklestob had been slain at the head of the stair by Jamie of Jenklebrae, on account of the honor of the worshipful Lady Muriend, wha was in some sort an ally of the family; natheless"—

"But to cut that matter short, Mr. Caleb," said the Keeper, "perhaps you will favor me with a ewer of water."

* Note F. Ancient Hospitality.

"God forbid your lordship should drink water in this family," replied Caleb, "to the disgrace of so honorable an house!"

"Nevertheless, if his lordship have a fancy," said the Master, smiling, "I think you might indulge him; for, if I mistake not, there has been water drank here at no distant date, and with good relish too."

"To be sure, if his lordship has a fancy," said Caleb; and re-entering with a jug of pure element—"He will scarce find such water onywhere as is drawn frae the well at Wolf's Crag—nevertheless"—

"Nevertheless, we must leave the Lord Keeper to his repose in this poor chamber of ours," said the Master of Ravenswood, interrupting his talkative domestic, who immediately turning to the doorway, with a profound reverence, prepared to usher his master from the secret chamber.

But the Lord Keeper prevented his host's departure—"I have but one word to say to the Master of Ravenswood, Mr. Caleb, and I fancy he will excuse your waiting."

With a second reverence, lower than the former, Caleb withdrew—and his master stood motionless, expecting, with considerable embarrassment, what was to close the events of a day fraught with unexpected incidents.

"Master of Ravenswood," said Sir William Ashton with some embarrassment, "I hope you understand the Christian law too well to suffer the sun to set upon your anger."

The Master blushed and replied, "He had no occasion that evening to exercise the duty enjoined upon him by his Christian faith."

"I should have thought otherwise," said his guest, "considering the various subjects of dispute and litigation which have unhappily occurred more frequently than was desirable or necessary betwixt the late honorable lord, your father, and myself."

"I could wish, my lord," said Ravenswood, agitated by suppressed emotion, "that reference to these circumstances should be made anywhere rather than under my father's roof."

"I should have felt the delicacy of this appeal at another time," said Sir William Ashton, "but, now I must proceed with what I mean to say.—I have suffered too much in my own mind, from the false delicacy which prevented my soliciting with earnestness, what indeed I frequently requested, a personal communing with your father—much distress of mind to him and to me might have been prevented."

"It is true," said Ravenswood, after a moment's reflection;

"I have heard my father say your lordship had proposed a personal interview."

"Proposed, my dear Master? I did indeed propose it, but I ought to have begged, entreated, beseeched it. I ought to have torn away the veil which interested persons had stretched betwixt us, and shown myself, as I was, willing to sacrifice a considerable part even of my legal rights, in order to conciliate feelings so natural as his must be allowed to have been. Let me say for myself, my young friend, for so I will call you, that had your father and I spent the same time together which my good fortune has allowed me to-day to pass in your company, it is possible the land might yet have enjoyed one of the most respectable of its ancient nobility, and I should have been spared the pain of parting in enmity from a person whose general character I so much admired and honored."

He put his handkerchief to his eyes. Ravenswood also was moved, but awaited in silence the progress of this extraordinary communication.

"It is necessary," continued the Lord Keeper, "and proper that you should understand, that there have been many points betwixt us, in which, although I judged it proper that there should be an exact ascertainment of my legal rights by the decree of a court of justice, yet it was never my intention to press them beyond the verge of equity."

"My lord," said the Master of Ravenswood, "it is unnecessary to pursue this topic further. What the law will give you, or has given you, you enjoy—or you shall enjoy; neither my father, nor myself, would have received anything on the footing of favor."

"Favor?—no—you misunderstand me," resumed the Keeper; "or rather you are no lawyer. A right may be good in law, and ascertained to be so, which yet a man of honor may not in every case care to avail himself of."

"I am sorry for it, my lord," said the Master.

"Nay, nay," retorted his guest, "you speak like a young counselor; your spirit goes before your wit. There are many things still open for decision betwixt us. Can you blame me, an old man desirous of peace, and in the castle of a young nobleman who has saved my daughter's life and my own, that I am desirous, anxiously desirous, that these should be settled on the most liberal principles?"

The old man kept fast hold of the Master's passive hand as he spoke, and made it impossible for him, be his predetermination what it would, to return any other than an acquiescent reply;

and wishing his guest good-night, he postponed farther conference until the next morning.

Ravenswood hurried into the hall, where he was to spend the night, and for a time traversed its pavement with a disordered and rapid pace. His mortal foe was under his roof, yet his sentiments toward him were neither those of a feudal enemy nor of a true Christian. He felt as if he could neither forgive him in the one character, nor follow forth his vengeance in the other, but that he was making a base and dishonorable composition betwixt his resentment against the father, and his affection for his daughter. He cursed himself as he hurried to and fro in the pale moonlight, and more ruddy gleams of the expiring wood fire. He threw open and shut the latticed windows with violence, as if alike impatient of the admission and exclusion of free air. At length, however, the torrent of passion foamed off its madness, and he flung himself into the chair, which he proposed as his place of repose for the night.

If, in reality,—such were the calmer thoughts that followed the first tempest of his passion,—if, in reality, this man desires no more than the law allows him—if he is willing to adjust even his acknowledged rights upon an equitable footing, what could be my father's cause of complaint?—what is mine?—Those from whom we won our ancient possessions fell under the sword of my ancestors, and left lands and livings of the conquerers; we sink under the force of the law, now too powerful for the Scottish chivalry. Let us parley with the victors of the day, as if we had been besieged in our fortress, and without hope of relief. This man may be other than I have thought him; and his daughter—but I have resolved not think of her.

He wrapt his cloak around him, fell asleep, and dreamed of Lucy Ashton till daylight gleamed through the lattices.

CHAPTER FOURTEENTH.

“We worldly men, when we see friends and kinsman
Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand
To lift them up, but rather set our feet
Upon their heads to press them to the bottom,
As I must yield with you I practised it;
But now I see you in a way to rise,
I can and will assist you.”

NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS.

THE Lord Keeper carried with him to a couch harder than he was accustomed to stretch himself upon, the same ambitious thoughts and political perplexities, which drive sleep from the

softest down that ever spread a bed of state. He had sailed long enough amid the contending tides and currents of the time to be sensible of their peril, and of the necessity of trimming his vessel to the prevailing wind, if he would have her escape shipwreck in the storm. The nature of his talents, and the timorousness of disposition connected with them, had made him assume the pliability of the versatile old Earl of Northampton, who explained the art by which he kept his ground during all the changes of state, from the reign of Henry VIII. to that of Elizabeth, by the frank avowal, that he was born of the willow, not of the oak. It had accordingly been Sir William Ashton's policy, on all occasions, to watch the changes in the political horizon, and, ere yet the conflict was decided, to negotiate some interest for himself with the party most likely to prove victorious. His time-serving disposition was well known, and excited contempt of the more daring leaders of both factions in the state. But his talents were of a useful and practical kind, and his legal knowledge held in high estimation; and they so far counterbalanced other deficiencies, that those in power were glad to use and to reward, though without absolutely trusting or greatly respecting him.

The Marquis of A—— had used his utmost influence to effect a change in the Scottish cabinet, and his schemes had been of late so well laid and so ably supported, that there appeared a very great chance of his proving ultimately successful. He did not, however, feel so strong or so confident as to neglect any means of drawing recruits to his standard. The acquisition of the Lord Keeper was deemed of some importance, and a friend, perfectly acquainted with his circumstances and character, became responsible for his political conversion.

When this gentleman arrived at Ravenswood Castle upon a visit, the real purpose of which was disguised under general courtesy, he found the prevailing fear which at present beset the Lord Keeper was that of danger to his own person from the Master of Ravenswood. The language which the blind sibyl old Alice had used; the sudden appearance of the Master, armed, and within his precincts, immediately after he had been warned against danger from him; the cold and haughty return received in exchange for the acknowledgments with which he loaded him for his timely protection, had all made a strong impression on his imagination.

So soon as the Marquis's political agent found how the wind sat, he began to insinuate fears and doubts of another kind, scarce less calculated to affect the Lord Keeper. He inquired with seeming interest whether the proceedings in Sir

William's complicated litigation with the Ravenswood family were out of court, and settled without the possibility of appeal! The Lord Keeper answered in the affirmative; but his interrogator was too well informed to be imposed upon. He pointed out to him, by unanswerable arguments, that some of the most important points which had been decided in his favor against the house of Ravenswood were liable, under the Treaty of Union, to be reviewed by the British House of Peers, a court of equity of which the Lord Keeper felt an instinctive dread. This course came instead of an appeal to the old Scottish Parliament, or, as it was technically termed, "a protestation for remeid in law."

The Lord Keeper, after he had for some time disputed the legality of such a proceeding, was compelled at length to comfort himself with the improbability of the young Master of Ravenswood's finding friends in parliament capable of stirring in so weighty an affair.

"Do not comfort yourself with that false hope," said his wily friend; "it is possible that in the next session of parliament young Ravenswood may find more friends and favor even than your lordship."

"That would be a sight worth seeing," said the Keeper, scornfully.

"And yet," said his friend, "such things have been seen ere now, and in our own time. There are many at the head of affairs even now, that a few years ago were under hiding for their lives; and many a man now dines on plate of silver that was fain to eat his crowdy without a bicker; and many a high head has been brought full low among us in as short a space. (Scott of Scotstarvet's 'Staggering State of Scots Statesmen,' of which curious memoir you showed me a manuscript, has been out-staggered in our time."

The Lord Keeper answered with a deep sigh, "that these mutations were no new sights in Scotland, and had been witnessed long before the time of the satirical author he had quoted. It was many a long year," he said, "since Fordun had quoted as an ancient proverb, '*Neque dives, neque fortis, sed nec sapiens Scotus, prædominante invidia, diu durabit in terra.*'"

"And be assured, my esteemed friend," was the answer, "that even your long services to the state, or deep legal knowledge, will not save you, or render your estate stable, if the Marquis of A—— comes in with a party in the British Parliament. You know that the deceased Lord Ravenswood was his near ally, his lady being fifth in descent from the Knight of Tillibardine

and I am well assured that he will take young Ravenswood by the hand, and be his very good lord and kinsman. Why should he not?—The Master is an active and stirring young fellow, able to help himself with tongue and hands; and it is such as he that finds friends among their kindred, and not those unarméd and unable Mephibosheths, that are sure to be a burden to every one that takes them up. And so, if these Ravenswood cases be called over the coals in the House of Peers, you will find that the Marquis will have a crow to pluck with you."

"That would be an evil requital," said the Lord Keeper, "for my long services to the state, and the ancient respect in which I have held his lordship's honorable family and person."

"Ay, but," rejoined the agent of the Marquis, "it is in vain to look back on past service and auld respect, my lord—it will be present service and immediate proofs of regard, which, in these sliddery times, will be expected by a man like the Marquis."

The Lord Keeper now saw the full drift of his friend's argument, but he was too cautious to return any positive answer.

"He knew not," he said, "the service which the Lord Marquis could expect from one of his limited abilities, that had not always stood at his command, still saving and reserving his duty to his king and country."

Having thus said nothing, while he seemed to say everything, for the exception was calculated to cover whatever he might afterward think proper to bring under it, Sir William Ashton changed the conversation, nor did he again permit the same topic to be introduced. His guest departed without having brought the wily old statesman the length of committing himself, or of pledging himself, to any future line of conduct, but with the certainty that he had alarmed his fears in a most sensible point, and laid a foundation for future and further treaty.

When he rendered an account of his negotiation to the Marquis, they both agreed that the Keeper ought not to be permitted to relapse into security, and that he should be plied with new subjects of alarm, especially during the absence of his lady. They were well aware that her proud, vindictive, and predominating spirit would be likely to supply him with the courage in which he was deficient—that she was immovably attached to the party now in power, with whom she maintained a close correspondence and alliance, and that she hated, without fearing, the Ravenswood family (whose more ancient dignity threw discredit on the newly-acquired grandeur of her husband), to such a degree, that she would have periled the interest of her own

house to have the prospect of altogether crushing that of her enemy.

But Lady Ashton was now absent. The business which had long detained her in Edinburgh, had afterward induced her to travel to London, not without the hope that she might contribute her share to disconcert the intrigues of the Marquis at court, for she stood high in favor with the celebrated Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, to whom, in point of character, she bore considerable resemblance. It was necessary to press her husband hard before her return; and, as a preparatory step, the Marquis wrote to the Master of Ravenswood the letter which we rehearsed in a former chapter. It was cautiously worded, so as to leave it in the power of the writer hereafter to take as deep, or as slight an interest in the fortunes of his kinsman, as the progress of his own schemes might require. But, however unwilling, as a statesman, the Marquis might be to commit himself, or assume the character of a patron, while he had nothing to give away, it must be said to his honor, that he felt a strong inclination effectually to befriend the Master of Ravenswood, as well as to use his name as a means of alarming the terrors of the Lord Keeper.

As the messenger who carried this letter was to pass near the house of the Lord Keeper, he had it in direction, that, in the village adjoining to the park-gate of the castle, his horse should lose a shoe, and that, while it was replaced by the smith of the place, he should express the utmost regret for the necessary loss of time, and in the vehemence of his impatience, give it to be understood, that he was bearing a message from the Marquis of A—— to the Master of Ravenswood, upon a matter of life and death.

This news, with exaggerations, was speedily carried from various quarters to the ears of the Lord Keeper, and each reporter dwelt upon the extreme impatience of the courier, and the surprising short time in which he had executed his journey. The anxious statesman heard in silence; but in private Lockhard received orders to watch the courier on his return, to waylay him in the village, to ply him with liquor if possible, and to use all means, fair or foul, to learn the contents of the letter of which he was the bearer. But as this plot had been foreseen, the messenger returned by a different and distant road, and thus escaped the snare that was laid for him.

After he had been in vain expected for some time, Mr. Dingwall had orders to make especial inquiry among his clients of Wolf's Hope, whether such a domestic belonging to the Marquis of A—— had actually arrived at the neighboring castle.

This was easily ascertained ; for Caleb had been in the village one morning by five o'clock, to " borrow twa chappins of ale and a kipper " for the messenger's refreshment, and the poor fellow had been ill for twenty-four hours at Luckie Sma'trash's, in consequence of dining upon " saut saumon and sour drink." So that the existence of a correspondence betwixt the Marquis and his distressed kinsman, which Sir William Ashton had sometimes treated as a bugbear, was proved beyond the possibility of further doubt.

The alarm of the Lord Keeper became very serious. Since the Claim of Right, the power of appealing from the decisions of the civil court to the Estates of Parliament, which had formerly been held incompetent, had in many instances been claimed, and in some allowed, and he had no small reason to apprehend the issue, if the English House of Lords should be disposed to act upon an appeal from the Master of Ravenswood " for remeid in law." It would resolve into an equitable claim, and be decided, perhaps, upon the broad principles of justice, which were not quite so favorable to the Lord Keeper as those of strict law. Besides, judging, though most inaccurately, from courts which he had himself known in the unhappy times preceding the Scottish Union, the Keeper might have too much right to think, that in the House to which his lawsuits were to be transferred, the old maxim might prevail in Scotland which was too well recognized in former times,—*"Show me the man, and I'll show you the law."* The high and unbiased character of English judicial proceedings was then little known in Scotland ; and the extension of them to that country was one of the most valuable advantages which it gained by the Union. But this was a blessing which the Lord Keeper, who had lived under another system, could not have the means of foreseeing. In the loss of his political consequence, he anticipated the loss of his lawsuit. Meanwhile, every report which reached him served to render the success of the Marquis's intrigues the more probable, and the Lord Keeper began to think it indispensable, that he should look round for some kind of protection against the coming storm. The timidity of his temper induced him to adopt measures of compromise and conciliation. The affair of the wild bull, properly managed, might, he thought, be made to facilitate a personal communication and reconciliation betwixt the Master and himself. He would then learn, if possible, what his own ideas were of the extent of his rights, and the means of enforcing them ; and perhaps matters might be brought to a compromise, where one party was wealthy, and the other so very poor. A reconciliation with Ravenswood was likely to

give him an opportunity to play his own game with the Marquis of A——. “And besides,” said he to himself, “it will be an act of generosity to raise up the heir of this distressed family; and if he is to be warmly and effectually befriended by the new government, who knows but my virtue may prove its own reward?”

Thus thought Sir William Ashton, covering with no unusual self-delusion his interested views with a hue of virtue; and having attained this point, his fancy strayed still further. He began to bethink himself, “that if Ravenswood was to have a distinguished place of power and trust—and if such a union should sopite the heavier part of his unadjusted claims—there might be worse matches for his daughter Lucy—the Master might be reposed against the attainder—Lord Ravenswood was an ancient title, and the alliance would, in some measure, legitimate his own possession of the greater part of the Master’s spoils, and make the surrender of the rest a subject of less bitter regret.”

With these mingled and multifarious plans occupying his head, the Lord Keeper availed himself of my Lord Bittlebrains’ repeated invitation to his residence, and thus came within a very few miles of Wolf’s Crag. Here he found the lord of the mansion absent, but was courteously received by the lady, who expected her husband’s immediate return. She expressed her particular delight at seeing Miss Ashton, and appointed the hounds to be taken out for the Lord Keeper’s special amusement. He readily entered into the proposal, as giving him an opportunity to reconnoitre Wolf’s Crag, and perhaps to make some acquaintance with the owner, if he should be tempted from his desolate mansion by the chase. Lockhard had his orders to endeavor on his part to make some acquaintance with the inmates of the castle, and we have seen how he played his part.

The accidental storm did more to further the Lord Keeper’s plan of forming a personal acquaintance with young Ravenswood, than his most sanguine expectations could have anticipated. His fear of the young nobleman’s personal resentment had greatly decreased, since he considered him as formidable from his legal claims, and the means he might have of enforcing them. But although he thought, not unreasonably, that only desperate circumstances drove men on desperate measures, it was not without a secret terror, which shook his heart within him, that he first felt himself enclosed within the desolate Tower of Wolf’s Crag; a place so well fitted, from solitude and strength, to be a scene of violence and vengeance. The stern reception at first given to them by the Master of Ravenswood,

and the difficulty he felt in explaining to that injured nobleman what guests were under the shelter of his roof, did not soothe these alarms; so that when Sir William Ashton heard the door of the courtyard shut behind him with violence, the words of Alice rung in his ears, "that he had drawn on matters too hardly with so fierce a race as those of Ravenswood, and that they would bide their time to be avenged."

The subsequent frankness of the Master's hospitality, as their acquaintance increased, abated the apprehensions those recollections were calculated to excite; and it did not escape Sir William Ashton, that it was to Lucy's grace and beauty he owed the change in their host's behavior.

All these thoughts thronged upon him when he took possession of the secret chamber. The iron lamp, the unfurnished apartment, more resembling a prison than a place of ordinary repose, the hoarse and ceaseless sound of the waves rushing against the base of the rock on which the castle was founded, saddened and perplexed his mind. To his own successful machinations, the ruin of the family had been in a great measure owing, but his disposition was crafty and not cruel; so that actually to witness the desolation and distress he had himself occasioned, was as painful to him as it would be to the humane mistress of a family to superintend in person the execution of the lambs and poultry which are killed by her own directions. At the same time, when he thought of the alternative of restoring to Ravenswood a large proportion of his spoils, or of adopting, as an ally and member of his own family, the heir of this impoverished house, he felt as the spider may be supposed to do, when his whole web, the intricacies of which had been planned with so much art, is destroyed by the chance sweep of a broom. And then, if he should commit himself too far in this matter, it gave rise to a perilous question which many a good husband, when under temptation to act as a free agent, has asked himself without being able to return a satisfactory answer; "What will my wife—what will Lady Ashton say?" On the whole, he came at length to the resolution in which minds of a weaker cast so often take refuge. He resolved to watch events, to take advantage of circumstances as they occurred, and regulate his conduct accordingly. In this spirit of temporizing policy, he at length composed his mind to rest.

CHAPTER FIFTEENTH.

A slight note I have about me for you, for the delivery of which you must excuse me. It is an offer that friendship calls upon me to do, and no way offensive to you, since I desire nothing but right upon both sides.

KING AND NO KING.

WHEN Ravenswood and his guest met in the morning, the gloom of the Master's spirit had in part returned. He, also, had passed a night rather of reflection than of slumber; and the feelings which he could not but entertain toward Lucy Ashton, had to support a severe conflict against those which he had so long nourished against her father. To clasp in friendship the hand of the enemy of his house, to entertain him under his roof, to exchange with him the courtesies and the kindness of domestic familiarity, was a degradation which his proud spirit could not be bent to without a struggle.

But the ice being once broken, the Lord Keeper was resolved it should not have time again to freeze. It had been part of his plan to stun and confuse Ravenswood's ideas, by a complicated and technical statement of the matters which had been in debate betwixt their families, justly thinking that it would be difficult for a youth of his age to follow the expositions of a practical lawyer, concerning actions of compt and reckoning, and of multiplepointings, and adjudications and wadsets, proper and improper, and pointings of the ground, and declarations of the expiry of the legal. Thus, thought Sir William, I shall have all the grace of appearing perfectly communicative, while my party will derive very little advantage from anything I may tell him. He therefore took Ravenswood aside into the deep recess of a window in the hall, and resuming the discourse of the preceding evening, expressed a hope that his young friend would assume some patience, in order to hear him enter into a minute and explanatory detail of those unfortunate circumstances in which his late honorable father had stood at variance with the Lord Keeper. The Master of Ravenswood colored highly, but was silent; and the Lord Keeper, though not greatly approving the sudden heightening of his auditor's complexion, commenced the history of a bond for twenty thousand

marks, advanced by his father to the father of Allan, Lord Ravenswood, and was proceeding to detail the executorial proceedings by which this large sum had been rendered a *debitum fundi*, when he was interrupted by the Master.

"It is not in this place," he said, "that I can hear Sir William Ashton's explanation of the matters in question between us. It is not here, where my father died of a broken heart, that I can with decency or temper investigate the cause of his distress. I might remember that I was a son, and forget the duties of a host. A time, however, there must come, when these things shall be discussed in a place, and in a presence, where both of us will have equal freedom to speak and to hear."

"Any time," the Lord Keeper said, "any place was alike to those who sought nothing but justice. Yet it would seem he was, in fairness, entitled to some premonition respecting the grounds upon which the Master proposed to impugn the whole train of legal proceedings, which had been so well and ripely advised in the only courts competent."

"Sir William Ashton," answered the Master, with warmth, "the lands which you now occupy were granted to my remote ancestors for services done with his sword against the English invaders. How they have glided from us by a train of proceeding that seem to be neither sale, nor mortgage, nor adjudication for debt, but a nondescript and entangled mixture of all these rights—how annual rent has been accumulated upon principal, and no nook or coign of legal advantage left unoccupied, until our interest in our hereditary property seems to have melted away like an icicle in thaw—all this you understand better than I do. I am willing, however, to suppose, from the frankness of your conduct toward me, that I may in a great measure have mistaken your personal character, and that things may have appeared right and fitting to you, skillful and practised lawyer, which to my ignorant understanding seems very little short of injustice and gross oppression."

"And you, my dear Master," answered Sir William, "you, permit me to say, have been equally misrepresented to me. I was taught to believe you a fierce, imperious, hot-headed youth, ready, at the slightest provocation, to throw your sword into the scales of justice, and to appeal to those rude and forcible measures from which civil polity has long protected the people of Scotland. Then, since we were mutually mistaken in each other, why should not the young nobleman be willing to listen to the old lawyer, while, at least, he explains the points of difference betwixt them?"

"No, my Lord," answered Ravenswood; "it is in the

House of British Peers,* whose honor must be equal to their rank—it is in the court of last resort that we must parley together. The belted lords of Britain, her ancient peers, must decide, if it is their will that a house, not the least noble of their members, shall be stripped of their possessions, the reward of the patriotism of generations, as the pawn of a wretched mechanic becomes forfeit to the usurer the instant the hour of redemption has passed away. If they yield to the grasping severity of the creditor, and to the gnawing usury that eats into our lands as moths into a raiment, it will be of more evil consequence to them and their posterity than to Edgar Ravenswood—I shall still have my sword and my cloak, and can follow the profession of arms wherever a trumpet shall sound.”

As he pronounced these words, in a firm yet melancholy tone, he raised his eyes, and suddenly encountered those of Lucy Ashton, who had stolen unawares on their interview, and observed her looks fastened on them with an expression of enthusiastic interest and admiration, which had wrapt her for a moment beyond the fear of discovery. The noble form and fine features of Ravenswood, fired with the pride of birth and sense of internal dignity—the mellow and expressive tones of his voice, the desolate state of his fortunes, and the indifference with which he seemed to endure and to dare the worst that might befall, rendered him a dangerous object of contemplation for a maiden already too much disposed to dwell upon recollections connected with him. When their eyes encountered each other, both blushed deeply, conscious of some strong internal emotion, and shunned again to meet each other's looks.

Sir William Ashton had, of course, closely watched the expression of their countenances. “I need fear,” said he internally, “neither parliament nor protestation; I have an effectual mode of reconciling myself with this hot-tempered young fellow, in case he shall become formidable. The present object is, at all events, to avoid committing ourselves. The hook is fixed; we will not strain the line too soon—it is as well to reserve the privilege of slipping it loose, if we do not find the fish worth landing.”

In this selfish and cruel calculation upon the supposed attachment of Ravenswood to Lucy, he was so far from considering the pain he might give to the former, by thus dallying with his affections, that he even did not think upon the risk of involving his own daughter in the perils of an unfortunate passion; as if her predilection, which could not escape his atten-

* Note G. Appeal to Parliament.

tion, were like the flame of a taper, which might be lighted or extinguished at pleasure. But Providence had prepared a dreadful requital for this keen observer of human passions, who had spent his life in securing advantages to himself by artfully working upon the passions of others.

Caleb Balderston now came to announce that breakfast was prepared; for, in those days of substantial feeding, the relics of the supper amply furnished forth the morning meal. Neither did he forget to present to the Lord Keeper, with great reverence, a morning-draught in a large pewter cup, garnished with leaves of parsley and scurvy-grass. He craved pardon, of course for having omitted to serve it in the great silver standing cup as behoved, being that it was at present in a silversmith's in Edinburgh, for the purpose of being overlaid with gilt."

"In Edinburgh like enough," said Ravenswood; "but in what place, and for what purpose, I am afraid neither you nor I know."

"Aweel!" said Caleb, peevishly, "there's a man standing at the gate already this morning—that's ae thing that I ken—Does your honor ken whether ye will speak wi' him or no?"

"Does he wish to speak with me, Caleb?"

"Less will not serve him," said Caleb; "but ye had best take a visie of him through the wicket before opening the gate—it's no every ane we suld let into this castle."

"What! do you suppose him to be a messenger come to arrest me for debt?" said Ravenswood.

"A messenger arrest your honor for debt, and in your castle of Wolf's Crag!—your honor is jesting wi' auld Caleb this morning," However, he whispered in his ear as he followed him out, "I would be loath to do ony decent man a prejudice in your honor's gude opinion; but I would tak twa looks o' that chield before I let him within these walls."

He was not an officer of the law however; being no less a person than Captain Craigengelt, with his nose as red as a comfortable cup of brandy could make it, his laced cocked-hat set a little aside upon the top of his black riding periwig, a sword by his side, and pistols at his holsters, and his person arrayed in a riding suit, laid over with tarnished lace,—the very moral of one who would say, Stand, to a true man.

When the Master had recognized him, he ordered the gates to be opened. "I suppose," he said, "Captain Craigengelt, there are no such weighty matters betwixt you and me, but may be discussed in this place. I have company in the castle at

present, and the terms upon which we last parted must excuse my asking you to make part of them."

Craigengelt, although possessing the very perfection of impudence, was somewhat abashed by this unfavorable reception. "He had no intention," he said, "to force himself upon the Master of Ravenswood's hospitality—he was in the honorable service of bearing a message to him from a friend, otherwise the Master of Ravenswood should not have had reason to complain of this intrusion."

"Let it be short, sir," said the Master, "for that will be the best apology. Who is the gentleman who is so fortunate as to have your services as a messenger?"

"My friend Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw," answered Craigengelt, with conscious importance, and that confidence which the acknowledged courage of his principal inspired, "who conceives himself to have been treated by you with something much short of the respect which he had reason to demand, and therefore is resolved to exact satisfaction. I bring with me," said he taking a piece of paper out of his pocket, "the precise length of his sword; and he requests you will meet him, accompanied by a friend, and equally armed, at any place within a mile of the castle, when I shall give attendance as umpire, or second, on his behoof."

"Satisfaction—and equal arms!" repeated Ravenswood, who, the reader will recollect, had no reason to suppose he had given the slightest offence to his late inmate—"upon my word, Captain Craigengelt, either you have invented the most improbable falsehood that ever came into the mind of such a person, or your morning-draught has been somewhat of the strongest. What could persuade Bucklaw to send me such a message?"

"For that sir," replied Craigengelt, "I am desired to refer you to what, in duty to my friend, I am to term your inhospitality in excluding him from your house without reasons assigned."

"It is impossible," replied the Master; "he cannot be such a fool as to interpret actual necessity as an insult. Nor do I believe, that, knowing my opinion of you, Captain, he would have employed the services of so slight and inconsiderable a person as yourself upon such an errand, as I certainly could expect no man of honor to act with you in the office of umpire."

"I slight and inconsiderable!" said Craigengelt, raising his voice, and laying his hand on his cutlass; "if it were not that the quarrel of my friend craves the precedence, and is

in dependence before my own, I would give you to understand"—

"I can understand nothing upon your explanation, Captain Craigengelt. Be satisfied of that, and oblige me with your departure."

"D——n!" muttered the bully; "and is this the answer which I am to carry back to an honorable message!"

"Tell the Laird of Bucklaw," answered Ravenswood, "if you are really sent by him, that when he sends me his cause of grievance by a person fitting to carry such an errand betwixt him and me, I will either explain it or maintain it."

"Then, Master, you will at least cause to be returned to Hayston, by my hands, his property which is remaining in your possession."

"Whatever property Bucklaw may have left behind him, sir," replied the Master, "shall be returned to him by my servant, as you do not show me any credentials from him which entitle you to receive it."

"Well, Master," said Captain Craigengelt, with malice which even his fear of the consequences could not suppress,—“you have this morning done me an egregious wrong and dishonor, but far more to yourself. A castle, indeed!” he continued, looking around him; “why, this is worse than a *coupe-gorge* house, where they receive travelers to plunder them of their property.”

"You insolent rascal," said the Master, raising his cane, and making a grasp at the Captain's bridle, "if you do not depart without uttering another syllable, I will baton you to death."

At the motion of the Master toward him the bully turned so rapidly round, that with some difficulty he escaped throwing down his horse, whose hoofs struck fire from the rocky pavement in every direction. Recovering him, however, with the bridle, he pushed for the gate, and rode sharply back again in the direction of the village.

As Ravenswood turned round to leave the courtyard after this dialogue he found that the Lord Keeper had descended from the hall, and witnessed, though at the distance prescribed by politeness, his interview with Craigengelt.

"I have seen," said the Lord Keeper, "that gentleman's face, and at no great distance of time—his name is Craig—Craig—something, is it not?"

"Craigengelt is the fellow's name," said the Master, "at least that by which he passes at present."

"Craig-in-guilt," said Caleb, punning upon the word *craig*,

which in Scotch signifies throat; "if he is Craig-in-guilt just now, he is as likely to be Craig-in-peril as ony child I ever saw—the loon has woodie written on his very visonomy, and I wad wager twa and a plack that plaits his hemp cravat yet."

"You understand physiognomy, good Mr. Caleb," said the Keeper smiling; "I assure you the gentleman has been near such a consummation before now—for I most distinctly recollect, that, upon occasion of a journey which I made about a fortnight ago to Edinburgh, I saw Mr. Craigengelt, or whatever is his name, undergo a severe examination before the Privy Council."

"Upon what account?" said the Master of Ravenswood, with some interest.

The question led immediately to a tale which the Lord Keeper had been very anxious to introduce, when he could find a graceful and fitting opportunity. He took hold of the Master's arm, and led him back toward the hall. "The answer to your question," he said, "though it is a ridiculous business is only fit for your own ear."

As they entered the hall, he again took the Master apart into one of the recesses of the window, where it will be easily believed that Miss Ashton did not venture again to intrude upon their conference.

CHAPTER SIXTEENTH.

—Here is a father now,
Will truck his daughter for a foreign venture,
Make her the stop-gap to some canker'd feud,
Or fling her o'er, like Jonah, to the fishes,
To appease the sea at highest.

ANONYMOUS.

THE Lord Keeper opened his discourse with an appearance of unconcern, marking, however, very carefully the effect of his communication upon young Ravenswood.

"You are aware," he said, "my young friend, that suspicion is the natural vice of our unsettled times, and exposes the best and wisest of us to the imposition of artful rascals. If I had been disposed to listen to such the other day, or even if I had been the wily politician which you have been taught to believe me, you, Master of Ravenswood, instead of being at freedom, and with full liberty to solicit and act against me as you please, in defence of what you suppose to be your rights, would have

been in the Castle of Edinburgh, or some other state prison; or, if you had escaped that destiny, it must have been by flight to a foreign country, and at the risk of a sentence of fugitation."

"My Lord Keeper," said the Master, "I think you would not jest on such a subject—yet it seems impossible you can be in earnest."

"Innocence," said the Lord Keeper, "is also confident, and sometimes, though very excusably, presumptuously so."

"I do not understand," said Ravenswood, "how a consciousness of innocence can be, in any case, accounted presumptuous."

"Imprudent, at least, it may be called," said Sir William Ashton, "since it is apt to lead us into the mistake of supposing that sufficiently evident to others, of which, in fact, we are only conscious ourselves. I have known a rogue, for this very reason make a better defence than an innocent man could have done in the same circumstances of suspicion. Having no consciousness of innocence to support him, such a fellow applies himself to all the advantages which the law will afford him, and sometimes (if his counsel be men of talent) succeeds in compelling his judges to receive him as innocent. I remember the celebrated case of Sir Coolie Condiddle, of Condiddle, who was tried for theft under trust, of which all the world knew him guilty, and yet was not only acquitted, but lived to sit in judgment on honester folk."

"Allow me to beg you will return to the point," said the Master; "you seemed to say that I had suffered under some suspicion."

"Suspicion, Master!—ay, truly—and I can show you the proofs of it; if I happen only to have them with me.—Here, Lockhard"—His attendant came—"Fetch me the little private mail with the padlocks that I recommended to your particular charge—d'ye hear?"

"Yes, my lord." Lockhard vanished; and the Keeper continued, as if half speaking to himself.

"I think the papers are with me—I think so, for as I was to be in this country, it was natural for me to bring them with me. I have them, however, at Ravenswood Castle, that I am sure of—so perhaps you might condescend"—

Here Lockhard entered, and put the leathern scrutoire, or mail-box, into his hands. The Keeper produced one or two papers, respecting the information laid before the Privy Council concerning the riot, as it was termed at the funeral of Allan Lord Ravenswood, and the active share he had himself taken in quashing the proceedings against the Master. These docu-

ments had been selected with care, so as to irritate the natural curiosity of Ravenswood upon such a subject without gratifying it, yet to show that Sir William Ashton had acted upon that trying occasion the part of an advocate and peace-maker betwixt him and the jealous authorities of the day. Having furnished his host with such subjects for examination, the Lord Keeper went to the breakfast table, and entered into light conversation, addressed partly to old Caleb, whose resentment against the usurper of the Castle of Ravenswood began to be softened by his familiarity, and partly to his daughter.

After perusing these papers, the Master of Ravenswood remained for a minute or two with his hand pressed against his brow, in deep and profound meditation. He then again ran his eye hastily over the papers, as if desirous of discovering in them some deep purpose, or some mark of fabrication, which had escaped him at first perusal. Apparently the second reading confirmed the opinion which had pressed upon him at the first, for he started from the stone bench on which he was sitting, and, going to the Lord Keeper, took his hand, and, strongly pressing it, asked his pardon repeatedly for the injustice he had done him, when it appeared he was experiencing, at his hands, the benefit of protection to his person, and vindication to his character.

The statesman received these acknowledgments at first with well-feigned surprise, and then with an affectation of frank cordiality. The tears began already to start from Lucy's blue eyes at viewing this unexpected and moving scene. To see the Master, late so haughty and reserved, and whom she had always supposed the injured person supplicating her father for forgiveness, was a change at once surprising, flattering, and affecting.

"Dry your eyes, Lucy," said her father; "why should you weep because your father, though a lawyer, is discovered to be a fair and honorable man? What have you to thank me for, my dear Master," he continued, addressing Ravenswood, "that you would not have done in my case? '*Suum cuique tribuito*,' was the Roman justice, and I learned it when I studied Justinian. Besides, have ye not overpaid me a thousand times, in saving the life of this dear child?"

"Yes," answered the Master, in all the remorse of self-accusation; "but the little service *I* did was an act of mere brutal instinct; *your* defence of my cause, when you knew how ill I thought of you, and how much I was disposed to be your enemy, was an act of generous, manly, and considerate wisdom."

"Pshaw!" said the Lord Keeper, "each of us acted in his own way; you as a gallant soldier, I as an upright judge and privy-councillor. We could not, perhaps, have changed parts—at least I should have made a very sorry *Tauridor*, and you, my good Master, though your cause is so excellent, might have pleaded it perhaps worse yourself, than I who acted for you before the council."

"My generous friend!" said Ravenswood;—and with that brief word, which the Keeper had often lavished upon him, but which he himself now pronounced for the first time, he gave to his feudal enemy the full confidence of a haughty but honorable heart. The Master had been remarked among his contemporaries for sense and acuteness, as well as for his reserved, pertinacious, and irascible character. His prepossessions accordingly, however obstinate, were of a nature to give way before love and gratitude; and the real charms of the daughter, joined to the supposed services of the father, cancelled in his memory the vows of vengeance which he had taken so deeply on the eve of his father's funeral. But they had been heard and registered in the book of fate.

Caleb was present at this extraordinary scene, and he could conceive no other reason for a proceeding so extraordinary than an alliance betwixt the houses, and Ravenswood Castle assigned for the young lady's dowry. As for Lucy, when Ravenswood uttered the most passionate excuses for his ungrateful negligence, she could but smile through her tears, and, as she abandoned her hand to him, assure him, in broken accents, of the delight with which she beheld the complete reconciliation between her father and her deliverer. Even the statesman was moved and affected by the fiery, unreserved, and generous self-abandonment with which the Master of Ravenswood renounced his feudal enmity, and threw himself without hesitation upon his forgiveness. His eyes glistened as he looked upon a couple who were obviously becoming attached, and who seemed made for each other. He thought how high the proud and chivalrous character of Ravenswood might rise under many circumstances, in which *he* found himself "over-crowded," to use a phrase of Spenser, and kept under, by his brief pedigree, and timidity of disposition. Then his daughter—his favorite child—his constant playmate—seemed formed to live happy in a union with such a commanding spirit as Ravenswood; and even the fine, delicate, fragile form of Lucy Ashton seemed to require the support of the Master's muscular strength and masculine character. And it was not merely during a few minutes that Sir William Ashton looked upon their marriage as a probable and

even desirable event, for a full hour intervened ere his imagination was crossed by recollections of the Master's poverty, and the sure displeasure of Lady Ashton. It is certain, that the very unusual flow of kindly feeling with which the Lord Keeper had been thus surprised, was one of the circumstances which gave much tacit encouragement to the attachment between the Master and his daughter, and led both the lovers distinctly to believe that it was a connection which would be most agreeable to him. He himself was supposed to have admitted this in effect, when, long after the catastrophe of their love, he used to warn his hearers against permitting their feelings to obtain an ascendancy over their judgment, and affirm, that the greatest misfortune of his life was owing to a very temporary predominance of sensibility over self-interest. It must be owned, if such was the case, he was long and severely punished for an offence of very brief duration.

After some pause, the Lord Keeper resumed the conversation.—“In your surprise at finding me an honest man than you expected, you have lost your curiosity about this Craigen-gelt, my good Master; and yet your name was brought in, in the course of that matter, too.”

“The scoundrel!” said Ravenswood; “my connection with him was of the most temporary nature possible; and yet I was very foolish to hold any communication with him at all.—What did he say of me?”

“Enough,” said the Keeper, “to excite the very loyal terrors of some of our sages, who are for proceeding against men on the mere grounds of suspicion or mercenary information.—Some nonsense about your proposing to enter into the service of France, or of the Pretender, I don't recollect which, but which the Marquis of A——, one of your best friends, and another person, whom some call one of your worst and most interested enemies, could not, somehow, be brought to listen to.”

“I am obliged to my honorable friend—and yet”—shaking the Lord Keeper's hand—“and yet I am still more obliged to my honorable enemy.”

“*Inimicus amicusissimus*,” said the Lord Keeper returning the pressure; “but this gentleman—this Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw—I am afraid the poor young man—I heard the fellow mention his name—is under very bad guidance.”

“He is old enough to govern himself,” answered the Master.

“Old enough, perhaps, but scarce wise enough, if he has chosen this fellow for his *fidus Achates*. Why, he lodged an

information against him—that is, such a consequence might have ensued from his examination, had we not looked rather at the character of the witness than the tenor of his evidence.”

“Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw,” said the Master, “is, I believe, a most honorable man, and capable of nothing that is mean or disgraceful.”

“Capable of much that is unreasonable, though; that you must needs allow, Master. Death will soon put him in possession of a fair estate, if he hath it not already; old Lady Girnington—an excellent person, excepting that her inveterate ill-nature rendered her intolerable to the whole world—is probably dead by this time. Six heirs-portioners have successively died to make her wealthy. I know the estates well; they march* with my own—a noble property.”

“I am glad of it,” said Ravenswood, “and should be more so, were I confident that Bucklaw would change his company and habits with his fortunes. This appearance of Craigengelt, acting in the capacity of his friend, is a most vile augury for his future respectability.”

“He is a bird of evil omen, to be sure,” said the Keeper, “and croaks of jails and gallows-tree.—But I see Mr. Caleb grows impatient for our return to breakfast.”

CHAPTER SEVENTEENTH.

Sir, stay at home, and take an old man's counsel;
 Seek not to bask you by a stranger's hearth;
 Our own blue smoke is warmer than their fire;
 Domestic food is wholesome, though 'tis homely,
 And foreign dainties poisonous, though tasteful.

THE FRENCH COURTEZAN.

THE Master of Ravenswood took an opportunity to leave his guests to prepare for their departure, while he himself made the brief arrangements necessary previous to his absence from Wolf's Crag for a day or two. It was necessary to communicate with Caleb on this occasion, and he found that faithful servitor in his sooty and ruinous den, greatly delighted with the departure of their visitors, and computing how long, with good management, the provisions which had been unexpended might furnish forth the Master's table. “He's nae belly god, that's ae blessing; and Bucklaw's gane, that could have eaten a horse behind the saddle. Cresses or water-purpie, and a bit ait-cake, can serve the Master for breakfast as weel as Caleb,

* *i.e.* They are bounded by my own.

Then for dinner—there's no muckle left on the spule-bane ; it will brander, though—it will brander* very well."

His triumphant calculations were interrupted by the Master, who communicated to him, not without some hesitation, his purpose to ride with the Lord Keeper as far as Ravenswood Castle, and to remain there for a day or two.

"The mercy of Heaven forbid!" said the old serving-man, turning as pale as the table-cloth which he was folding up.

"And why, Caleb?" said his master, "why should the mercy of Heaven forbid my returning the Lord Keeper's visit?"

"Oh, sir," replied Caleb—"O Mr. Edgar! I am your servant, and it ill becomes me to speak—but I am an auld servant—have served baith your father and gudesire, and mind to have seen Lord Randal, your great-grandfather—but that was when I was a bairn."

"And what of all this, Balderston" said the Master; what can it possibly have to do with my paying some ordinary civility to a neighbor?"

"O Mr. Edgar,—that is, my lord!" answered the butler, "your ain conscience tells you it isna for your father's son to be neighboring wi' the like o' him—it isna for the credit of the family. An he were ance come to terms, and to gie ye back your ain, e'en though ye suld honor his house wi' your alliance, I suldna say na—for the young leddy is a winsome sweet creature—But keep your ain state wi' them—I ken the race o' them weel—they will think the mair o' ye."

"Why, now, you go further than I do, Caleb," said the Master, drowning a certain degree of consciousness in a forced laugh; "you are for marrying me into a family that you will not allow me to visit—how's this—and you look as pale as death besides."

"O, sir," repeated Caleb again, "you would but laugh if I tauld it; but Thomas the Rhymer, whose tongue couldna be fause, spoke the word of your house that will e'en prove ower true if you go to Ravenswood this day—O, that it should e'er have been fulfilled in my time!"

"And what is it, Caleb?" said Ravenswood, wishing to soothe the fears of his old servant.

Caleb replied, "he had never repeated the lines to living mortal—they were told to him by an auld priest that had been confessor to Lord Allan's father when the family were Catholic. But mony a time," he said, "I hae soughed thae dark words ower to mysell, and, well-a-day! little did I think of their coming round this day."

"Truce with your nonsense, and let me hear the doggerel which has put it into your head," said the Master impatiently.

With a quivering voice, and a cheek pale with apprehension, Caleb faltered out the following lines :—

"When the last Laird of Ravenswood to Ravenswood shall ride,
And woo a dead maiden to be his bride,
He shall stable his steed in the Kelpie's flow,
And his name shall be lost for evermoe!"

"I know the Kelpie's flow well enough," said the Master ; "I suppose, at least, you mean the quicksand betwixt this tower and Wolf's Hope ; but why any man in his senses should stable a steed there"——

"O, never speer ony thing about that, sir—God forbid we should ken what the prophecy means—but just bide you at hame, and let the strangers ride to Ravenswood by themselves. We have done enough for them ; and to do mair, would be mair against the credit of the family than in its favor."

"Well, Caleb," said the Master, "I give you the best possible credit for your good advice on this occasion ; but as I do not go to Ravenswood to seek a bride, dead or alive, I hope I shall choose a better stable for my horse than the Kelpie's quicksand, and especially as I have always had a particular dread of it since the patrol of dragoons were lost there ten years since. My father and I saw them from the tower struggling against the advancing tide, and they were lost long before any help could reach them."

"And they deserved it weel, the southern loons !" said Caleb ; "what had they ado capering on our sands, and hindering a wheen honest folk frae bringing on shore a drap brandy ? I hae seen them that busy, that I wad hae fired the auld culverin, or the demisaker that's on the south bartisan at them, only I was feared they might burst in the ganging aff."

Caleb's brain was now fully engaged with abuse of the English soldiery and excisemen, so that his master found no great difficulty in escaping from him and rejoining his guests. All was now ready for their departure ; and one of the Lord Keeper's grooms having saddled the Master's steed, they mounted in the courtyard.

Caleb had, with much toil, opened the double doors of the outward gate, and thereat stationed himself, endeavoring, by the reverential, and, at the same time, consequential air which he assumed, to supply by his own gaunt, wasted, and thin person, the absence of a whole baronial establishment of porters, warders, and liveried menials.

The Keeper returned his deep reverence with a cordial farewell, stooping at the same time from his horse, and sliding into the butler's hand the remuneration which in those days was always given by a departing guest to the domestics of the family where he had been entertained. Lucy smiled on the old man with her usual sweetness, bade him adieu, and deposited her guerdon with a grace of action and a gentleness of accent, which could not have failed to have won the faithful retainer's heart, but for Thomas the Rhymer, and the successful lawsuit against his master. As it was, he might have adopted the language of the Duke, in *As you Like it*—

“Thou wouldst have better pleased me with this deed,
If thou hadst told me of another father.”

Ravenswood was at the lady's bridle-rein, encouraging her timidity, and guiding her horse carefully down the rocky path which led to the moor, when one of the servants announced from the rear, that Caleb was calling loudly after them, desiring to speak with his master. Ravenswood felt it would look singular to neglect this summons, although inwardly cursing Caleb for his impertinent officiousness; therefore he was compelled to relinquish to Mr. Lockhard the agreeable duty in which he was engaged, and to ride back to the gate of the courtyard. Here he was beginning, somewhat peevishly, to ask Caleb the cause of his clamor, when the good old man exclaimed, “Whisht, sir! whisht, and let me speak just ae word that I couldna say afore folk—there”—(putting into his lord's hand the money he had just received)—“there's three gowd pieces—and ye'll want siller up by yonder—But stay, whisht now!” for the Master was beginning to exclaim against this transference—“never say a word, but just see to get them changed in the first town ye ride through, for they are bran new frae the mint, and kenspeckle a wee bit.”

“You forget, Caleb,” said his master, striving to force back the money on his servant, and extricate the bridle from his hold—“You forget that I have some gold pieces left of my own. Keep these to yourself, my old friend; and once more, good day to you. I assure you I have plenty. You know you have managed that our living should cost us little or nothing.”

“Aweel,” said Caleb, “these will serve for you another time; but see ye hae enough, for, doubtless, for the credit of the family, there maun be some civility to the servants, and ye maun hae something to mak a show with when they say, Master, will you bet a broad piece? Then ye maun tak out your purse, and say, I carena if I do; and tak care no to agree

on the articles of the wager, and just put up your purse again, and"—

"This is intolerable, Caleb—I really must be gone."

"And you will go, then?" said Caleb, loosening his hold upon the Master's cloak, and changing his didactics into a pathetic and mournful tone—"And you *will* go, for a' I have told you about the prophecy, and the dead bride, and the Kelpie's quicksand?—Aweel! a wilful man maun hae his way—he that will to Cupar maun to Cupar. But pity of your life, sir, if ye be fowling or shooting in the park—beware of drinking at the Mermaiden's Well—He's gane! he's down the path, arrow-flight after her!—The head is as clean ta'en aff the Ravenswood family this day, as I wad chap the head aff a sybo!"

The old butler looked long after his master, often clearing away the dew as it rose to his eyes, that he might, as long as possible, distinguish his stately form from those of the other horsemen. "Close to her bridle-rein—ay, close to her bridle-rein!—Wisely saith the holy man, 'By this, also you may know that woman hath dominion over all men;'—and without this lass would not our ruin have been a'thegither fulfilled."

With a heart fraught with such sad auguries did Caleb return to his necessary duties at Wolf's Crag, as soon as he could no longer distinguish the object of his anxiety among the group of riders, which diminished in the distance.

In the meantime the party pursued their route joyfully. Having once taken his resolution, the Master of Ravenswood was not of a character to hesitate or pause upon it. He abandoned himself to the pleasure he felt in Miss Ashton's company, and displayed an assiduous gallantry, which approached as nearly to gayety as the temper of his mind and state of his family permitted. The Lord Keeper was much struck with his depth of observation, and the unusual improvement which he had derived from his studies. Of these accomplishments Sir William Ashton's profession and habits of society rendered him an excellent judge; and he well knew how to appreciate a quality to which he himself was a total stranger,—the brief and decided dauntlessness of the Master of Ravenswood's disposition, who seemed equally a stranger to doubt and to fear. In his heart the Lord Keeper rejoiced at having conciliated an adversary so formidable, while, with a mixture of pleasure and anxiety, he anticipated the great things his young companion might achieve, were the breath of court favor to fill his sails.

"What could she desire?" he thought, his mind always conjuring up opposition in the person of Lady Ashton to his now prevailing wish—"What could a woman desire in a match,

more than the sopiting of a very dangerous claim, and the alliance of a son-in-law, noble, brave, well-gifted, and highly connected—sure to float whenever the tide sets his way—strong, exactly where we are weak, in pedigree, and in the temper of a swordman?—Sure no reasonable woman would hesitate,—But, alas !”—Here his argument was stopped by the consciousness that Lady Ashton was not always reasonable, in his sense of the word, “To prefer some clownish Merse laird to the gallant young nobleman, and to the secure possession of Ravenswood upon terms of easy compromise—it would be the act of a madwoman !”

Thus pondered the veteran politician, until they reached Bittlebrains’ House, where it had been previously settled they were to dine and repose themselves, and prosecute their journey in the afternoon.

They were received with an excess of hospitality ; and the most marked attention was offered to the Master of Ravenswood, in particular, by their noble entertainers. The truth was, that Lord Bittlebrains had obtained his peerage by a good deal of plausibility, an art of building up a character for wisdom upon a very trite style of commonplace eloquence, a steady observation of the changes of the times, and the power of rendering certain political services to those who could best reward them. His lady and he not feeling quite easy under their new honors, to which use had not adopted their feelings, were very desirous to procure the fraternal countenance of those who were born denizens of the regions into which they had been exalted from a lower sphere. The extreme attention which they paid to the Master of Ravenswood, had its usual effect in exalting his importance in the eyes of the Lord Keeper, who, although he had a reasonable degree of contempt for Lord Bittlebrains’ general parts, entertained a high opinion of the acuteness of his judgment in all matters of self-interest.

“I wish Lady Ashton had seen this,” was his internal reflection ; “no man knows so well as Bittlebrains on which side his bread is buttered ; and he fawns on the Master like a beggar’s messan on a cook. And my lady, too, bringing forward her beetle-browed misses to skirl and play upon the virginals, as if she said, pick and choose. They are no more comparable to Lucy than an owl is to a cygnet, and so they may carry their black brows to a further market.”

The entertainment being ended, our travelers, who had still to measure the longest part of their journey, resumed their horses ; and after the Lord Keeper, the Master, and the domestics, had drunk *doch-an-dorroch*, or the stirrup-cup, in the

liquors adopted to their various ranks, the cavalcade resumed its progress.

It was dark by the time they entered the avenue of Ravenswood Castle, a long straight line leading directly to the front of the house, flanked with huge elm-trees, which sighed to the night wind, as if they compassionated the heir of their ancient proprietors, who now returned to their shades in the society, and almost in the retinue, of their new master. Some feelings of the same kind oppressed the mind of the Master himself. He gradually became silent, and dropped a little behind the lady, at whose bridle-rein he had hitherto waited with such devotion. He well recollected the period, when, at the same hour in the evening, he had accompanied his father, as that nobleman left, never again to return to it, the mansion from which he derived his name and title. The extensive front of the old castle, on which he remembered having often looked back, was then "as black as mourning weed." The same front now glanced with many lights, some throwing far forward into the night a fixed and stationary blaze, and others hurrying from one window to another, intimating the bustle and busy preparations preceding their arrival, which had been intimated by an avant-courier. The contrast pressed so strongly upon the Master's heart, as to awaken some of the sterner feelings with which he had been accustomed to regard the new lord of his paternal domain, and to impress his countenance with an air of severe gravity, when, alighted from his horse, he stood in the hall, no longer his own, surrounded by the numerous menials of its present owner.

The Lord Keeper, when about to welcome him with the cordiality which their late intercourse seemed to render proper, became aware of the change, refrained from his purpose, and only intimated the ceremony of reception by a deep reverence to his guest, seeming thus delicately to share the feelings which predominated on his brow.

Two upper domestics, bearing each a huge pair of silver candlesticks, now marshaled the company into a large saloon, or withdrawing room, where new alterations impressed upon Ravenswood the superior wealth of the present inhabitants of the castle. The mouldering tapestry, which, in his father's time, had half-covered the walls of this stately apartment, and half streamed from them in tatters, had given place to a complete finishing of wainscot, the cornice of which, as well as the frames of the various compartments, were ornamented with festoons of flowers and with birds, which, though carved in oak, seemed, such was the art of the chisel, actually to swell

their throats and flutter their wings. Several old family portraits of armed heroes of the House of Ravenswood, together with a suit or two of old armor, and some military weapons, had given place to those of King William and Queen Mary, of Sir Thomas Hope and Lord Stair, two distinguished Scottish lawyers. The pictures of the Lord Keeper's father and mother were also to be seen; the latter, sour, shrewish, and solemn, in her black hood and close pinnars, with a book of devotion in her hand; the former, exhibiting beneath a black silk Geneva cowl, or skull-cap, which sat as close to the head as if it had been shaven, a pinched, peevish, puritanical set of features, terminating in a hungry, reddish, peaked beard, forming on the whole a countenance in the expression of which the hypocrite seemed to contend with the miser and the knave. And it is to make room for such scarecrows as these, thought Ravenswood, that my ancestors have been torn down from the walls which they erected. He looked at them again, and, as he looked, the recollection of Lucy Ashton (for she had not entered the apartment with them) seemed less lively in his imagination. There were also two or three Dutch drolleries, as the pictures of Ostade and Teniers were then termed, with one good painting of the Italian school. There was, besides, a noble full-length of the Lord Keeper in his robes of office, placed beside his lady in silk and ermine—a haughty beauty, bearing in her looks all the pride of the House of Douglas, from which she was descended. The painter, notwithstanding his skill, overcome by the reality, or, perhaps, from a suppressed sense of humor, had not been able to give the husband on the canvas that air of awful rule and right supremacy, which indicates the full possession of domestic authority. It was obvious, at the first glance, that, despite mace and gold frogs, the Lord Keeper was somewhat henpecked. The floor of this fine saloon was laid with rich carpets, huge fires blazed in the double chimneys, and ten silver sconces, reflecting with their bright plates the lights which they supported, made the whole seem as brilliant as day.

“Would you choose any refreshment, Master?” said Sir William Ashton, not unwilling to break the awkward silence.

He received no answer, the Master being so busily engaged in marking the various changes which had taken place in the apartment, that he hardly heard the Lord Keeper address him. A repetition of the offer of refreshment, with the addition, that the family meal would be presently ready, compelled his attention, and reminded him that he acted a weak, perhaps even a ridiculous part, in suffering himself to be overcome by the

circumstances in which he found himself. He compelled himself, therefore, to enter into conversation with Sir William Ashton, with as much appearance of indifference as he could well command.

"You will not be surprised, Sir William, that I am interested in the changes you have made for the better in this apartment. In my father's time, after our misfortunes compelled him to live in retirement, it was little used, except by me as a play-room, when the weather would not permit me to go abroad. In that recess was my little workshop, where I treasured the few carpenter's tools which old Caleb procured for me, and taught me how to use—there, in yonder corner, under that handsome silver sconce, I kept my fishing-rods, and hunting poles, bows, and arrows."

"I have a young birkie," said the Lord Keeper, willing to change the tone of the conversation, "of much the same turn—He is never happy, save when he is in the field—I wonder he is not here.—Here, Lockhard—send William Shaw for Mr. Henry—I suppose he is, as usual, tied to Lucy's apron-string—that foolish girl, Master, draws the whole family after her at her pleasure."

Even this allusion to his daughter, though artfully thrown out, did not recall Ravenswood from his own topic.

"We were obliged to leave," he said, "some armor and portraits in this apartment—may I ask where they have been removed to?"

"Why" answered the Keeper, with some hesitation, "the room was fitted up in our absence—and *cedant arma togæ*, is the maxim of lawyers, you know—I am afraid it has been here somewhat too literally complied with. I hope—I believe they are safe—I am sure I gave orders—may I hope that when they are recovered, and put in proper order, you will do me the honor to accept them at my hand, as an atonement for their accidental derangement?"

The Master of Ravenswood bowed stiffly, and, with folded arms, again resumed his survey of the room.

Henry, a spoilt boy of fifteen, burst into the room, and ran up to his father. "Think of Lucy, papa; she has come home so cross and so fractious, that she will not go down to the stable to see my new pony, that Bob Wilson brought from the Mull of Galloway."

"I think you were very unreasonable to ask her," said the Keeper.

"Then you are as cross as she is," answered the boy;

"but when mamma comes home, she'll claw up both your mittens."

"Hush your impertinence, you little forward imp!" said his father; "where is your tutor?"

"Gone to a wedding in Dunbar—I hope he'll get a haggis to his dinner;" and he began to sing the old Scottish song,

“There was a haggis in Dunbar,
 Fal de ral, etc.
 Mony better and few waur,
 Fal de ral, etc.”

"I am much obliged to Mr. Cordery for his attentions," said the Lord Keeper; "and pray who has had the charge of you while I was away, Mr. Henry?"

"Norman and Bob Wilson—forby my own self."

"A groom and a gamekeeper, and your own silly self—proper guardians for a young advocate!—Why, you will never know any statutes but those against shooting red-deer, killing salmon, and—"

"And speaking of red-game," said the young scapegrace, interrupting his father without scruple or hesitation, "Norman has shot a buck, and I showed the branches to Lucy, and she says they have but eight tynes; and she says that you killed a deer with Lord Bittlebrains' hounds, when you were west away, and, do you know, she says it had ten tynes—is it true?"

"It may have had twenty, Henry, for what I know; but if you go to that gentleman, he can tell you all about it—Go speak to him, Henry—it is the Master of Ravenswood."

While they conversed thus, the father and son were standing by the fire; and the Master, having walked toward the upper end of the apartment stood with his back toward them, apparently engaged in examining one of the paintings. The boy ran up to him, and pulled him by the skirt of the coat with the freedom of a spoilt child, saying, "I say, sir—if you please to tell me" —but when the Master turned round, and Henry saw his face, he became suddenly and totally disconcerted—walked two or three steps backward, and still gazed on Ravenswood with an air of fear and wonder, which had totally banished from his features their usual expression of pert vivacity.

"Come to me, young gentleman," said the Master, "and I will tell you all I know about the hunt."

"Go to the gentleman, Henry," said his father; "you are not used to be so shy."

But neither invitation nor exhortation had any effect on the

boy. On the contrary, he turned round as soon as he had completed his survey of the Master, and, walking as cautiously as if he had been treading upon eggs, he glided back to his father, and pressed as close to him as possible. Ravenswood, to avoid hearing the dispute betwixt the father and the over-indulged boy, thought it most polite to turn his face once more toward the pictures, and pay no attention to what they said.

"Why do you not speak to the Master, you little fool?" said the Lord Keeper.

"I am afraid," said Henry, in a very low tone of voice.

"Afraid, you goose!" said his father, giving him a slight shake by the collar—"What makes you afraid?"

"What makes him so like the picture of Sir Malise Ravenswood, then?" said the boy, whispering.

"What picture, you natural?" said his father. "I used to think you only a scapegrace, but I believe you will turn out a born idiot."

"I tell you it is the picture of old Malise of Ravenswood, and he is as like it as if he had loupén out of the canvas; and it is up in the old Baron's hall that the maids launder the clothes in, and it has armor, and not a coat like the gentleman—and he has not a beard and whiskers like the picture—and it has another kind of thing about the throat, and no band-strings as he has—and"—

"And why should not the gentleman be like his ancestor, you silly boy?" said the Lord Keeper.

"Ay; but if he is come to chase us all out of the castle," said the boy, "and has twenty men at his back in disguise—and is come to say, with a hollow voice, *I bide my time*—and is to kill you on the hearth as Malise did the other man, and whose blood is still to be seen!"

"Hush! nonsense!" said the Lord Keeper, not himself much pleased to hear these disagreeable coincidences forced on his notice.—"Master, here comes Lockhard to say supper is served."

And, at the same instant, Lucy entered at another door, having changed her dress since her return. The exquisite feminine beauty of her countenance, now shaded only by a profusion of sunny tresses; the sylph-like form disencumbered of her heavy riding-skirt, and mantled in azure silk; the grace of her manner and of her smile, cleared, with a celerity which surprised the Master himself, all the gloomy and unfavorable thoughts which had for some time overclouded his fancy. In those features, so simply sweet, he could trace no alliance with the pinched visage of the peak-bearded, black-capped Puritan,

or his starch withered spouse, with the craft expressed in the Lord Keeper's countenance, or the haughtiness which predominated in that of his lady; and, while he gazed on Lucy Ashton, she seemed to be an angel descended on earth, unallied to the coarser mortals among whom she deigned to dwell for a season. Such is the power of beauty over a youthful and enthusiastic fancy.

CHAPTER EIGHTEENTH.

————— I do too ill in this,
 And must not think but that a parent's plaint
 Will move the heavens to pour forth misery
 Upon the head of disobedience,
 Yet reason tells us, parents are o'erseen,
 When with too strict a rein they do hold in
 Their child's affections, and control that love
 Which the high powers divine inspire them with.

THE HOG HATH LOST HIS PEARL.

THE feast of Ravenswood Castle was as remarkable for its profusion, as that of Wolf's Crag had been for its ill-veiled penury. The Lord Keeper might feel internal pride at the contrast, but he had too much tact to suffer it to appear. On the contrary, he seemed to remember with pleasure what he called Mr. Balderston's bachelor's meal, and to be rather disgusted than pleased with the display upon his own groaning board.

"We do these things," he said, "because others do them—but I was bred a plain man at my father's frugal table, and I should like well, would my wife and family permit me, to return to my sowens and my poor-man-of-mutton." *

This was a little overstretched. The Master only answered, "That different ranks—I mean," said he, correcting himself, "different degrees of wealth require a different style of house-keeping."

This dry remark put a stop to further conversation on the subject, nor is it necessary to record that which was substituted in its place. The evening was spent with freedom, and even cordiality; and Henry had so far overcome his first apprehensions, that he had settled a party for coursing a stag with the representative and living resemblance of grim Sir Malise of Ravenswood, called the Revenger. The next morning was the

* Note H. The Poor-Man-of-Mutton.

appointed time. It rose upon active sportsmen and successful sport. The banquet came in course ; and a pressing invitation to tarry yet another day was given and accepted. This Ravenswood had resolved should be the last of his stay ; but he recollected he had not yet visited the ancient and devoted servant of his house, Old Alice, and it was but kind to dedicate one morning to the gratification of so ancient an adherent.

To visit Alice, therefore, a day was devoted, and Lucy was the Master's guide upon the way. Henry, it is true, accompanied them, and took from their walk the air of a *tête-à-tête*, while, in reality, it was little else, considering the variety of circumstances which occurred to prevent the boy from giving the least attention to what passed between his companions. Now a rook settled on a branch within shot—anon a hare crossed their path, and Henry and his greyhound went astray in pursuit of it—then he had to hold a long conversation with the forester, which detained him awhile behind his companions—and again he went to examine the earth of a badger, which carried him on a good way before them.

The conversation betwixt the Master and his sister, meanwhile, took an interesting, and almost confidential turn. She could not help mentioning the sense of the pain he must feel in visiting scenes so well known to him, bearing now an aspect so different ; and so gently was her sympathy expressed, that Ravenswood felt it for a moment as a full requital of all his misfortunes. Some such sentiment escaped him, which Lucy heard with more of confusion than displeasure ; and she may be forgiven the imprudence of listening to such language, considering that the situation in which she was placed by her father seemed to authorize Ravenswood to use it. Yet she made an effort to turn the conversation, and she succeeded ; for the Master also had advanced further than he intended, and his conscience had instantly checked him when he found himself on the verge of speaking love to the daughter of Sir William Ashton.

They now approached the hut of old Alice, which had of late been rendered more comfortable, and presented an appearance less picturesque, perhaps, but far neater than before. The old woman was on her accustomed seat beneath the weeping birch, basking, with the listless enjoyment of age and infirmity, in the beams of the autumn sun. At the arrival of her visitors she turned her head toward them. "I hear your step, Miss Ashton," she said, "but the gentleman who attends you is not my lord, your father."

"And why should you think so, Alice?" said Lucy ; "or

how is it possible for you to judge so accurately by the sound of a step, on this firm earth, and in the open air ? ”

“ My hearing, my child, has been sharpened by my blindness, and I can now draw conclusions from the slightest sounds, which formerly reached my ears as unheeded as they now approach yours. Necessity is a stern, but an excellent school-mistress, and she that has lost her sight must collect her information from other sources.”

“ Well, you hear a man’s step, I grant it,” said Lucy ; “ but why, Alice, may it not be my father’s ? ”

“ The pace of age, my love, is timid and cautious—the foot takes leave of the earth slowly, and is planted down upon it with hesitation ; it is the hasty and determined step of youth that I now hear, and—could I give credit to so strange a thought—I should say it was the step of a Ravenswood.”

“ This is, indeed,” said Ravenswood, “ an acuteness of organ which I could not have credited had I not witnessed it.—I am indeed the Master of Ravenswood, Alice, the son of your old master.”

“ You ! ” said the old woman, with almost a scream of surprise—“ You the Master of Ravenswood—here—in this place, and thus accompanied?—I cannot believe it.—Let me pass my old hands over your face, that my touch may bear witness to my ears.”

The Master sat down beside her on the earthen bank, and permitted her to touch his features with her trembling hand.

“ It is, indeed ! ” she said, “ it is the features as well as the voice of Ravenswood—the high lines of pride, as well as the bold and haughty tone.—But what do you here, Master of Ravenswood?—what do you in your enemy’s domain, and in company with his child ? ”

As old Alice spoke, her face kindled, as probably that of an ancient feudal vassal might have done in whose presence his youthful liege-lord had showed some symptom of degenerating from the spirit of his ancestors.

“ The Master of Ravenswood,” said Lucy, who liked not the tone of this expostulation, and was desirous to abridge it “ is upon a visit to my father.”

“ Indeed ! ” said the old blind woman in an accent of surprise.

“ I knew,” continued Lucy, “ I should do him a pleasure by conducting him to your cottage.”

“ Where, to say the truth, Alice,” said Ravenswood, “ I expected a more cordial reception.”

“ It is most wonderful ! ” said the old woman, muttering to

herself; "but the ways of Heaven are not like our ways, and its judgments are brought about by means far beyond our fathoming.—Hearken, young man," she said; "your fathers were implacable, but they were honorable foes; they sought not to ruin their enemies under the mask of hospitality. What have you to do with Lucy Ashton?—why should your steps move in the same footpath with hers?—why should your voice sound in the same chord and time with those of Sir William Ashton's daughter?—Young man, he who aims at revenge by dishonorable means"——

"Be silent, woman!" said Ravenswood, sternly; "is it the devil that prompts your voice?—Know that this young lady has not on earth a friend who would venture farther to save her from injury or from insult."

"And is it even so?" said the old woman in an altered but melancholy tone—"Then God help you both!"

"Amen! Alice," said Lucy, who had not comprehended the import of what the blind woman had hinted, "and send you your senses, Alice, and your good humor. If you hold this mysterious language, instead of welcoming your friends, they will think of you as other people do."

"And how do other people think?" said Ravenswood, for he also began to believe the old woman spoke with incoherence.

"They think," said Henry Ashton, who came up at that moment, and whispered into Ravenswood's ear, "that she is a witch, that should have been burned with them that suffered at Haddington."

"What is that you say?" said Alice, turning toward the boy, her sightless vision inflamed with passion: "that I am a witch, and ought to have suffered with the helpless old wretches who were murdered at Haddington?"

"Hear to that now," again whispered Henry, "and me whispering lower than a wren cheeps?"

"If the usurer, and the oppressor, and the grinder of the poor man's face, and the remover of ancient land-marks, and the subverter of ancient houses, were at the same stake with me, I could say, light the fire, in God's name!"

"That is dreadful," said Lucy; "I have never seen the poor deserted woman in this state of mind; but age and poverty can ill bear reproach.—Come, Henry, we will leave her for the present—she wishes to speak with the Master alone. We will walk homeward, and rest us," she added, looking at Ravenswood, "by the Mermaiden's Well."

"And, Alice," said the boy, "if you know of any hare that comes through among the deer and makes them drop their

calves out of season, you may tell her, with my compliments to command, that if Norman has not got a silver bullet ready for her, I'll lend him one of my doublet-buttons on purpose."

Alice made no answer till she was aware that the sister and brother were out of hearing. She then said to Ravenswood, "And you, too, are angry with me for my love?—it is just that strangers should be offended, but you, too, are angry!"

"I am not angry, Alice," said the Master, "only surprised that you, whose good sense I have heard so often praised, should give way to offensive and unfounded suspicions."

"Offensive?" said Alice—"ay, truth is ever offensive—but, surely, not unfounded."

"I tell you, dame, most groundless," replied Ravenswood.

"Then the world has changed its wont, and the Ravenswoods their hereditary temper, and the eyes of old Alice's understanding are yet more blind than those of her countenance. When did a Ravenswood seek the house of his enemy, but with the purpose of revenge?—and hither are you come, Edgar Ravenswood, either in fatal anger, or in still more fatal love."

"In neither," said Ravenswood, "I give you mine honor—I mean, I assure you."

Alice could not see his blushing cheek, but she noticed his hesitation, and that he retracted the pledge which he seemed at first disposed to attach to his denial.

"It is so, then," she said, "and therefore she is to tarry by the Mermaid's Well! Often has it been called a place fatal to the race of Ravenswood—often has it proved so—but never was it likely to verify old sayings as much as on this day."

"You drive me to madness, Alice," said Ravenswood; "you are more silly and more superstitious than old Balderston. Are you such a wretched Christian as to suppose I would in the present day levy war against the Ashton family, as was the sanguinary custom in elder times? or do you suppose me so foolish, that I cannot walk by a young lady's side without plunging headlong in love with her?"

"My thoughts," replied Alice, "are my own; and if my mortal sight is closed to objects present with me, it may be I can look with more steadiness into future events. Are you prepared to sit lowest at the board which was once your father's own, unwillingly, as a connection and ally of his proud successor?—Are you ready to live on his bounty—to follow him in the bypaths of intrigue and chicane, which none can better point out to you—to gnaw the bones of his prey when he has devoured the substance?—Can you say as Sir William Ashton says—think as he thinks—vote as he votes, and call your father's

murderer your worshipful father-in-law and revered patron?—Master of Ravenswood, I am the eldest servant of your house, and I would rather see you shrouded and coffined!”

The tumult in Ravenswood's mind was uncommonly great, she struck upon and awakened a chord which he had for some time successfully silenced. He strode backward and forward through the little garden with a hasty pace; and at length checking himself, and stopping right opposite to Alice, he exclaimed, “Woman! on the verge of the grave, dare you urge the son of your master to blood and to revenge?”

“God forbid!” said Alice solemnly; “and therefore I would have you depart these fatal bounds, where your love, as well as your hatred, threatens sure mischief, or at least disgrace, both to yourself and to others. I would shield, were it in the power of this withered hand, the Ashtons from you, and you from them, and both from their own passions. You can have nothing—ought to have nothing, in common with them—Begone from among them; and if God has destined vengeance on the oppressor's house, do not you be the instrument.”

“I will think on what you have said, Alice,” said Ravenswood, more composedly. “I believe you mean truly and faithfully by me, but you urge the freedom of an ancient domestic somewhat too far. But farewell; and if Heaven afford me better means, I will not fail to contribute to your comfort.”

He attempted to put a piece of gold into her hand which she refused to receive; and, in the slight struggle attending his wish to force it upon her, it dropped to the earth.

“Let it remain an instant on the ground,” said Alice, as the Master stooped to raise it; “and believe me, that piece of gold is an emblem of her whom you love; she is as precious, I grant, but you must stoop even to abasement before you can win her. For me, I have as little to do with gold as with earthly passions; and the best news that the world has in store for me is, that Edgar Ravenswood is a hundred miles distant from the seat of his ancestors, with the determination never again to behold it.”

“Alice,” said the Master, who began to think this earnestness had some more secret cause than arose from anything that the blind woman could have gathered from this casual visit, “I have heard you praised by my mother for your sense, acuteness, and fidelity; you are no fool to start at shadows, or to dread old superstitious saws, like Caleb Balderston; tell me distinctly where my danger lies, if you are aware of any which is tending toward me. If I know myself, I am free from all such views respecting Miss Ashton as you impute to me. I have necessary business to settle with Sir William—that arranged, I

shall depart ; and with as little wish, as you may easily believe, to return to a place full of melancholy subjects of reflection, as you have to see me here."

Alice bent her sightless eyes on the ground, and was for some time plunged in deep meditation. "I will speak the truth," she said at length, raising up her head—"I will tell you the source of my apprehensions, whether my candor be for good or for evil.—Lucy Ashton loves you, Lord of Ravenswood !"

"It is impossible," said the Master.

"A thousand circumstances have proved it to me," replied the blind woman. "Her thoughts have turned on no one else since you saved her from death, and that my experienced judgment has won from her own conversation. Having told you this—if you are indeed a gentleman and your father's son—you will make it a motive for flying from her presence. Her passion will die like a lamp, for want of that the flame should feed upon ; but, if you remain here, her destruction, or yours, or that of both, will be the inevitable consequence of her misplaced attachment. I tell you this secret unwillingly, but it could not have been hid long from your own observation ; and it is better you learn it from mine. Depart, Master of Ravenswood—you have my secret. If you remain an hour under Sir William Ashton's roof without the resolution to marry his daughter, you are a villain—if with the purpose of allying yourself with him, you are an infatuated and predestined fool."

So saying, the old blind woman arose, assumed her staff, and tottering to her hut, entered it and closed the door, leaving Ravenswood to his own reflections.

CHAPTER NINETEENTH.

Lovelier in her own retired abode

—than Naiad by the side

Of Grecian brook—or Lady of the Mere

Lone sitting by the shores of old romance.

WORDSWORTH.

THE meditations of Ravenswood were of a very mixed complexion. He saw himself at once in the very dilemma which he had for some time felt apprehensive he might be placed in. The pleasure he felt in Lucy's company had indeed approached to fascination, yet it had never altogether surmounted his internal reluctance to wed with the daughter of his father's foe.

and even in forgiving Sir William Ashton the injuries which his family had received, and giving him credit for the kind intentions he professed to entertain, he could not bring himself to contemplate as possible an alliance betwixt their houses. Still he felt that Alice spoke truth, and that his honor now required he should take an instant leave of Ravenswood Castle, or become a suitor of Lucy Ashton. The possibility of being rejected, too, should he make advances to her wealthy and powerful father—to sue for the hand of an Ashton and be refused—this were a consummation too disgraceful. “I wish her well,” he said to himself, “And for her sake I forgive the injuries her father has done to my house; but I will never—no, never see her more!”

With one bitter pang he adopted this resolution, just as he came to where two paths parted; the one to the Mermaiden’s Fountain, where he knew Lucy waited him, the other leading to the castle by another and more circuitous road. He paused an instant when about to take the latter path, thinking what apology he should make for conduct which must needs seem extraordinary, and had just muttered to himself, “Sudden news from Edinburgh—any pretext will serve—only let me dally no longer here,” when young Henry came flying up to him, half out of breath—“Master, Master, you must give Lucy your arm back to the castle, for I cannot give her mine; for Norman is waiting for me, and I am to go with him to make his ring-walk, and I would not stay away for a gold Jacobus, and Lucy is afraid to walk home alone, though all the wild nowt have been shot, and so you must come away directly.”

Betwixt two scales equally loaded a feather’s weight will turn the scale. “It is impossible for me to leave the young lady in the wood alone,” said Ravenswood, “to see her once more can be of little consequence, after the frequent meetings we have had—I ought, too, in courtesy, to apprise her of my intention to quit the castle.”

And having thus satisfied himself that he was taking not only a wise, but an absolutely necessary step, he took the path to the fatal fountain. Henry no sooner saw him on the way to join his sister, than he was off like lightning in another direction to enjoy the society of the forester in their congenial pursuits. Ravenswood, not allowing himself to give a second thought to the propriety of his own conduct, walked with a quick step toward the stream, where he found Lucy seated alone by the ruin.

She sate upon one of the disjointed stones of the ancient fountain, and seemed to watch the progress of its current as it

bubbled forth to daylight in gay and sparkling profusion from under the shadow of the ribbed and darksome vault, with which veneration, or perhaps remorse, had canopied its source. To a superstitious eye, Lucy Ashton, folded in a plaided mantle, with her long hair, escaping partly from the snood and falling upon her silver neck, might have suggested the idea of the murdered Nymph of the Fountain. But Ravenswood only saw a female exquisitely beautiful, and rendered yet more so in his eyes—how could it be otherwise—by the consciousness that she had placed her affections on him. As he gazed on her, he felt his fixed resolution melting like wax in the sun, and hastened, therefore, from his concealment in the neighboring thicket. She saluted him, but did not arise from the stone on which she was seated.

“My mad-cap brother,” she said, “has left me, but I expect him back in a few minutes—for fortunately, as anything pleases him for a minute, nothing has charms for him much longer.”

Ravenswood did not feel the power of informing Lucy that her brother meditated a distant excursion and would not return in haste. He sate himself down on the grass at some little distance from Miss Ashton, and both were silent for a short space.

“I like this spot,” said Lucy at length, as if she had found the silence embarrassing; “the bubbling murmur of the clear fountain, the waving of the trees, the profusion of grass and wild-flowers, that rise among the ruins, make it like a scene in romance. I think, too, I have heard it is a spot connected with the legendary lore which I love so well.”

“It has been thought,” answered Ravenswood, “a fatal spot to my family; and I have some reason to term it so, for it was here I first saw Miss Ashton—and it is here I must take my leave of her forever.”

The blood, which the first part of this speech called into Lucy’s cheeks, was speedily expelled by its conclusion.

“To take leave of us, Master!” she exclaimed; “what can have happened to hurry you away?—I know Alice hates—I mean dislikes my father—and I hardly understood her humor to-day, it was so mysterious. But I am certain my father is sincerely grateful for the high service you rendered us. Let me hope that having won your friendship hardly, we shall not lose it lightly.”

“Lose it, Miss Ashton?” said the Master of Ravenswood, —“No—wherever my fortune calls me—whatever she inflicts upon me—it is your friend—your sincere friend, who acts or

suffers. But there is a fate on me, and I must go, or I shall add the ruin of others to my own."

"Yet do not go from us, Master," said Lucy; and she laid her hand, in all simplicity and kindness, upon the skirt of his cloak, as if to detain him—"You shall not part from us. My father is powerful, he has friends that are more so than himself—do not go till you see what his gratitude will do for you. Believe me, he is already laboring in your behalf with the Council."

"It may be so," said the Master, proudly; "yet it is not to your father, Miss Ashton, but to my own exertions, that I ought to owe success in the career on which I am about to enter. My preparations are already made—a sword and a cloak, and a bold heart and a determined hand."

Lucy covered her face with her hands, and the tears, in spite of her, forced their way between her fingers. "Forgive me," said Ravenswood, taking her right hand, which after slight resistance, she yielded to him, still continuing to shade her face with the left—"I am too rude—too rough—too intractable to deal with any being so soft and gentle as you are. Forget that so stern a vision has crossed your path of life—and let me pursue mine, sure that I can meet with no worse misfortune after the moment it divides me from your side."

Lucy wept on, but her tears were less bitter. Each attempt which the Master made to explain his purpose of departure, only proved a new evidence of his desire to stay; until, at length, instead of bidding her farewell, he gave his faith to her forever, and received her troth in return. The whole passed so suddenly, and arose so much out of the immediate impulse of the moment, that ere the Master of Ravenswood could reflect upon the consequences of the step which he had taken, their lips, as well as their hands, had pledged the sincerity of their affection.

"And now," he said, after a moment's consideration, "it is fit I should speak to Sir William Ashton—he must know of our engagement. Ravenswood must not seem to dwell under his roof, to solicit clandestinely the affections of his daughter."

"You would not speak to my father on the subject?" said Lucy, doubtingly; and then added more warmly, "O do not—do not! Let your lot in life be determined—your station and purpose ascertained, before you address my father; I am sure he loves you—I think he will consent—but then my mother!"—

She paused, ashamed to express the doubt she felt how far her father dared to form any positive resolution on this most important subject, without the consent of his lady.

"Your mother, my Lucy?" replied Ravenswood, "she is of the house of Douglas, a house that has intermarried with mine, even when its glory and power were at the highest—what could your mother object to my alliance?"

"I did not say, object," said Lucy; "but she is jealous of her rights, and may claim a mother's title to be consulted in the first instance."

"Be it so," replied Ravenswood; "London is distant, but a letter will reach it and receive an answer within a fortnight—I will not press on the Lord Keeper for an instant reply to my proposal."

"But," hesitated Lucy, "were it not better to wait—to wait a few weeks?—Were my mother to see you—to know you—I am sure she would approve; but you are unacquainted personally, and the ancient feud between the families"—

Ravenswood fixed upon her his keen dark eyes, as if he was desirous of penetrating into her very soul.

"Lucy," he said, "I have sacrificed to you projects of vengeance long nursed, and sworn to with ceremonies little better than heathen—I sacrificed them to your image, ere I knew the worth which it represented. In the evening which succeeded my poor father's funeral, I cut a lock from my hair, and, as it consumed in the fire, I swore that my rage and revenge should pursue his enemies, until they shriveled before me like that scorched-up symbol of annihilation."

"It was a deadly sin," said Lucy, turning pale, "to make a vow so fatal."

"I acknowledge it," said Ravenswood, "and it had been a worse crime to keep it. It was for your sake that I adjured these purposes of vengeance, though I scarce knew that such was the argument by which I was conquered, until I saw you once more, and became conscious of the influence you possessed over me."

"And why do you now," said Lucy, "recall sentiments so terrible—sentiments so inconsistent with those you profess for me—with those your importunity has prevailed on me to acknowledge?"

"Because," said her lover, "I would impress on you the price at which I have bought your love—the right I have to expect your constancy. I say not that I have bartered for it the honor of my house, its last remaining possession—but though I say it not, and think it not, I cannot conceal from myself that the world may do both."

"If such are your sentiments," said Lucy, "you have played a cruel game with me. But it is not too late to give it over—

take back the faith and troth which you could not plight to me without suffering abatement of honor—let what is passed be as if it had not been—forget me—I will endeavor to forget myself.”

“You do me injustice,” said the Master of Ravenswood; “by all I hold true and honorable, you do me the extremity of injustice—if I mentioned the price at which I have bought your love, it is only to show how much I prize it, to bind our engagement by a still firmer tie, and to show, by what I have done to attain this station in your regard, how much I must suffer should you ever break your faith.”

“And why, Ravenswood,” answered Lucy, “should you think that possible?—Why should you urge me with even the mention of infidelity?—Is it because I ask you to delay applying to my father for a little space of time? Bind me by what vows you please; if vows are unnecessary to secure constancy, they may yet prevent suspicion.”

Ravenswood pleaded, apologized, and even kneeled, to appease her displeasure; and Lucy, as placable as she was single-hearted, readily forgave the offence which his doubts had implied. The dispute thus agitated, however, ended by the lovers going through an emblematic ceremony of their troth-plight, of which the vulgar still preserve some traces. They broke betwixt them the thin broad-piece of gold which Alice had refused to receive from Ravenswood.

“And never shall this leave my bosom,” said Lucy, as she hung the piece of gold round her neck, and concealed it with her handkerchief, “until you, Edgar Ravenswood, ask me to resign it to you—and, while I wear it, never shall that heart acknowledge another love than yours.”

With like protestations, Ravenswood placed his portion of the coin opposite to his heart. And now, at length, it struck them, that time had hurried fast on during this interview, and their absence at the castle would be a subject of remark, if not of alarm. As they rose to leave the fountain which had been witness of their mutual engagement, an arrow whistled through the air, and struck a raven perched on the sere branch of an old oak, near to where they had been seated. The bird fluttered a few yards, and dropped at the feet of Lucy, whose dress was stained with some spots of its blood.

Miss Ashton was much alarmed, and Ravenswood, surprised and angry, looked everywhere for the marksman, who had given them a proof of his skill, as little expected as desired. He was not long of discovering himself, being no other than Henry Ashton, who came running up with a crossbow in his hand.

"I knew I should startle you," he said; "and do you know you looked so busy that I hoped it would have fallen souse on your heads before you were aware of it.—What was the Master saying to you, Lucy?"

"I was telling your sister what an idle lad you were, keeping us waiting here for you so long," said Ravenswood, to save Lucy's confusion.

"Waiting for me? Why, I told you to see Lucy home, and that I was to go to make the ring-walk with old Norman in the Hayberry thicket, and you may be sure that would take a good hour, and we have all the deer's marks and furnishes got, while you were sitting here with Lucy like a lazy loon."

"Well, well, Mr. Henry," said Ravenswood; "but let us see how you will answer to me for killing the raven. Do you know the ravens are all under the protection of the Lords of Ravenswood, and to kill one in their presence is such bad luck that it deserves the stab?"

"And that's what Norman said," replied the boy; "he came as far with me, as within a flight-shot of you, and he said he never saw a raven sit still so near living folk, and he wished it might be for good luck; for the raven is one of the wildest birds that flies, unless it be a tame one—and so I crept on and on, till I was within three score yards of him, and then whiz went the bolt, and there he lies, faith! Was it not well shot?—and, I daresay, I have not shot in a crossbow—not ten times maybe."

"Admirably shot indeed," said Ravenswood; "and you will be a fine marksman if you practise hard."

"And that's what Norman says," answered the boy; "but I am sure it is not my fault if I do not practise enough; for, of free will, I would do little else, only my father and tutor are angry sometimes, and only Miss Lucy there gives herself airs about my being busy, for all she can sit idle by a well-side the whole day, when she has a handsome young gentleman to prate with—I have known her do so twenty times, if you will believe me."

The boy looked at his sister as he spoke, and in the midst of his mischievous chatter, had the sense to see that he was really inflicting pain upon her, though without being able to comprehend the cause or the amount.

"Come now, Lucy," he said, "don't grieve; and if I have said anything beside the mark, I'll deny it again—and what does the Master of Ravenswood care if you had a hundred sweethearts? so ne'er put finger in your eye about it."

The Master of Ravenswood was, for the moment, scarce

satisfied with what he heard ; yet his good sense naturally regarded it as the chatter of a spoilt boy, who strove to mortify his sister in the point which seemed most accessible for the time. But although of a temper equally slow in receiving impressions, and obstinate in retaining them, the prattle of Henry served to nourish in his mind some vague suspicion, that his present engagement might only end in his being exposed like a conquered enemy in a Roman triumph, a captive attendant on the car of a victor, who meditated only the satiating his pride at the expense of the vanquished. There was, we repeat it, no real ground whatever for such an apprehension, nor could he be said seriously to entertain such for a moment. Indeed, it was impossible to look at the clear blue eye of Lucy Ashton, and entertain the slightest permanent doubt concerning the sincerity of her disposition. Still, however, conscious pride and conscious poverty combined to render a mind suspicious, which in more fortunate circumstances, would have been a stranger to that as well as to every other meanness.

They reached the castle, where Sir William Ashton, who had been alarmed by the length of their stay, met them in the hall.

" Had Lucy," he said, " been in any other company than that of one who had shown he had so complete power of protecting her, he confessed he should have been very uneasy, and would have despatched persons in quest of them. But, in the company of the Master of Ravenswood, he knew his daughter had nothing to dread."

Lucy commenced some apology for their long delay, but, conscience struck, became confused as she proceeded ; and when Ravenswood, coming to her assistance, endeavored to render the explanation complete and satisfactory, he only involved himself in the same disorder, like one who, endeavoring to extricate his companion from a slough, entangles himself in the same tenacious swamp. It cannot be supposed that the confusion of the two youthful lovers escaped the observation of the subtle lawyer, accustomed by habit and profession to trace human nature through all her windings. But it was not his present policy to take any notice of what he observed. He desired to hold the Master of Ravenswood bound, but wished that he himself should remain free ; and it did not occur to him that his plan might be defeated by Lucy returning the passion which he hoped she might inspire. If she should adopt some romantic feelings toward Ravenswood, in which circumstances, or the positive and absolute opposition of Lady Ashton, might render it unadvisable to indulge her, the Lord Keeper conceived

they might easily be superseded and annulled by a journey to Edinburgh, or even London, a new set of Brussels lace, and the soft whispers of half-a-dozen lovers, anxious to replace him whom it was convenient she should renounce. This was his provision for the worst view of the case. But, according to its more probable issue, any passing favor she might entertain for the Master of Ravenswood, might require encouragement rather than repression.

This seemed the more likely as he had that very morning, since their departure from the castle, received a letter, the contents of which he hastened to communicate to Ravenswood. A foot-post had arrived with a packet to the Lord Keeper from that friend whom we have already mentioned, who was laboring hard under-hand to consolidate a band of patriots, at the head of whom stood Sir William's greatest terror, the active and ambitious Marquis of A——. The success of this convenient friend had been such, that he had obtained from Sir William, not indeed a directly favorable answer, but certainly a most patient hearing. This he had reported to his principal, who had replied by the ancient French adage, "*Château qui parle, et femme qui écoute, l'un et l'autre va se rendre.*" A statesman who hears you propose a change of measures without reply, was, according to the Marquis's opinion, in the situation of the fortress which parleys, and the lady who listens, and he resolved to press the siege of the Lord Keeper.

The packet, therefore, contained a letter from his friend and ally, and another from himself to the Lord Keeper, frankly offering an unceremonious visit. They were crossing the country to go to the southward—the roads were indifferent, the accommodation of the inns as execrable as possible—the Lord Keeper had been long acquainted intimately with one of his correspondents, and though more slightly known to the Marquis, had yet enough of his Lordship's acquaintance to render the visit sufficiently natural, and to shut the mouths of those who might be disposed to impute it to a political intrigue. He instantly accepted the offered visit, determined, however, that he would not pledge himself an inch further for the furtherance of their views than *reason* (by which he meant his own self-interest) should plainly point out to him as proper.

Two circumstances particularly delighted him—the presence of Ravenswood, and the absence of his own lady. By having the former under his own roof, he conceived he might be able to quash all such hazardous and hostile proceedings as he might otherwise have been engaged in under the patronage of the Marquis; and Lucy, he foresaw, would make, for his im-

mediate purpose of delay and procrastination, a much better mistress of his family than her mother, who would, he was sure, in some shape or other, contrive to disconcert his political schemes by her proud and implacable temper.

His anxious solicitations that the Master would stay to receive his kinsman were of course readily complied with, since the *éclaircissement* which had taken place at the Mermaiden's Fountain had removed all wish for sudden departure. Lucy and Lockhard had, therefore, orders to provide all things necessary in their different departments for receiving the expected guests, with a pomp and display of luxury very uncommon in Scotland at that remote period.

CHAPTER TWENTIETH.

MARALL.—Sir, the man of honor's come,
Newly alighted ———

OVERREACH.—In without reply,
And do as I command. ———
Is the loud music I gave order for
Ready to receive him?

NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS.

SIR WILLIAM ASHTON, although a man of sense, legal information, and great practical knowledge of the world, had yet some points of character which corresponded better with the timidity of his disposition and the supple arts by which he had risen in the world, than to the degree of eminence which he had attained; as they tended to show an original mediocrity of understanding, however highly it had been cultivated, and a native meanness of disposition, however carefully veiled. He loved the ostentatious display of his wealth, less as a man to whom habit has made it necessary than as one to whom it is still delightful from its novelty. The most trivial details did not escape him; and Lucy soon learned to watch the flush of scorn which crossed Ravenswood's cheek when he heard her father gravely arguing with Lockhard, nay, even with the old housekeeper, upon circumstances which, in families of rank, are left uncared for, because it is supposed impossible they can be neglected.

"I could pardon Sir William," said Ravenswood, one evening after he had left the room, "some general anxiety upon this occasion, for the Marquis's visit is an honor, and should

be received as such; but I am worn out by these miserable minutiae of the buttery, and the larder, and the very hen-coop—they drive me beyond my patience; I would rather endure the poverty of Wolf's Crag than be pestered with the wealth of Ravenswood Castle."

"And yet," said Lucy, "it was by attention to these minutiae that my father acquired the property"——

"Which my ancestors sold for lack of it," replied Ravenswood. "Be it so; a porter still bears but a burden, though the burden be of gold."

Lucy sighed; she perceived too plainly that her lover held in scorn the manners and habits of a father, to whom she had long looked up as her best and most partial friend, whose fondness had often consoled her for her mother's contemptuous harshness.

The lovers soon discovered that they differed upon other and no less important topics. Religion, the mother of peace, was in those days of discord so misconstrued and mistaken, that her rules and forms were the subject of the most opposite opinions, and the most hostile animosities. The Lord Keeper, being a whig, was, of course, a Presbyterian, and had found it convenient, at different periods, to express greater zeal for the kirk than perhaps he really felt. His family, equally of course, were trained under the same institution. Ravenswood, as we know, was a High-Churchman, or Episcopalian, and frequently objected to Lucy the fanaticism of some of her own communion, while she intimated, rather than expressed, horror at the latitudinarian principles which she had been taught to think connected with the prelatical form of church government.

Thus, although their mutual affection seemed to increase rather than to be diminished, as their characters opened more fully on each other, the feelings of each were mingled with some less agreeable ingredients. Lucy felt a secret awe, amid all her affection for Ravenswood. His soul was of a higher, prouder character, than those with whom she had hitherto mixed in intercourse; his ideas were more fierce and free; and he contemned many of the opinions which had been inculcated upon her, as chiefly demanding her veneration. On the other hand, Ravenswood saw in Lucy a soft and flexible character, which, in his eyes at least, seemed too susceptible of being moulded to any form by those with whom she lived. He felt that his own temper required a partner of a more independent spirit, who could set sail with him on his course of life, resolved as himself to dare indifferently the storm and the favoring breeze. But Lucy was so beautiful, so devoutly attached

to him, of a temper so exquisitely soft and kind, that, while he could have wished it were possible to inspire her with a greater degree of firmness and resolution, and while he sometimes became impatient of the extreme fear which she expressed of their attachment being prematurely discovered, he felt that the softness of a mind, amounting almost to feebleness, rendered her even dearer to him, as a being who had voluntarily clung to him for protection, and made him the arbiter of her fate for weal or woe. His feelings toward her at such moments, were those which have been since so beautifully expressed by our immortal Joanna Baillie:—

——— Thou sweetest thing,
That e'er did fix its lightly-fibred sprays
To the rude rock, ah! wouldst thou cling to me?
Rough and storm-worn I am—yet love me as
Thou truly dost, I will love thee again
With true and honest heart, though all unmeet
To be the mate of such sweet gentleness.

Thus the very points in which they differed, seemed, in some measure, to ensure the continuance of their mutual affection. If, indeed, they had so fully appreciated each other's character before the burst of passion in which they hastily pledged their faith to each other, Lucy might have feared Ravenswood too much ever to have loved him, and he might have construed her softness and docile temper as imbecility rendering her unworthy of his regard. But they stood pledged to each other; and Lucy only feared that her lover's pride might one day teach him to regret his attachment; Ravenswood, that a mind so ductile as Lucy's might, in absence or difficulties, be induced, by the entreaties or influence of those around her, to renounce the engagement she had formed.

"Do not fear it," said Lucy, when upon one occasion a hint of such suspicion escaped her lover; "the mirrors which receive the reflection of all successive objects are framed of hard materials like glass or steel—the softer substances, when they receive an impression, retain it undefaced."

"This is poetry, Lucy," said Ravenswood, "and in poetry there is always fallacy, and sometimes fiction."

"Believe me, then, once more, in honest prose," said Lucy, "that, though I will never wed man without the consent of my parents, yet neither force nor persuasion shall dispose of my hand till you renounce the right I have given you to it."

The lovers had ample time for such explanations. Henry was now more seldom their companion, being either a most unwilling attendant upon the lessons of his tutor, or a forward

volunteer under the instructions of the foresters or grooms. As for the Keeper, his mornings were spent in his study, maintaining correspondences of all kinds, and balancing in his anxious mind the various intelligence which he collected from every quarter concerning the expected change in Scottish politics, and the probable strength of the parties who were about to struggle for power. At other times he busied himself about arranging, and countermanding, and then again arranging, the preparations which he judged necessary for the reception of the Marquis of A —, whose arrival had been twice delayed by some necessary cause of detention.

In the midst of all these various avocations, political and domestic, he seemed not to observe how much his daughter and his guest were thrown into each other's society, and was censured by many of his neighbors, according to the fashion of neighbors in all countries, for suffering such an intimate connection to take place betwixt two young persons. The only natural explanation was, that he designed them for each other; while, in truth, his only motive was to temporize and procrastinate, until he should discover the real extent of the interest which the Marquis took in Ravenswood's affairs, and the power which he was likely to possess of advancing them. Until these points should be made both clear and manifest, the Lord Keeper resolved that he would do nothing to commit himself, either in one shape or other; and, like many cunning persons, he overreached himself deplorably.

Amongst those who had been disposed to censure with the greatest severity the conduct of Sir William Ashton, in permitting the prolonged residence of Ravenswood under his roof, and his constant attendance on Miss Ashton, was the new Laird of Girnington, and his faithful squire and bottle-holder, personages formerly well known to us by the names of Hayston and Bucklaw, and his companion Captain Craigengelt. The former had at length succeeded to the extensive property of his long-lived grand-aunt, and to considerable wealth besides, which he had employed in redeeming his paternal acres (by the title appertaining to which he still chose to be designated), notwithstanding Captain Craigengelt had proposed to him a most advantageous mode of vesting the money in Law's scheme, which was just then broached, and offered his services to travel express to Paris for the purpose. But Bucklaw had so far derived wisdom from adversity, that he would listen to no proposal which Craigengelt could invent, which had the slightest tendency to risk his newly-acquired independence. He that once had eaten pease bannocks, drank sour wine and slept in the secret chamber

at Wolf's Crag, would, he said, prize good cheer and a soft bed as long as he lived, and take special care not to need such hospitality again.

Craigengelt, therefore, found himself disappointed in the first hopes he had entertained of making a good hand of the Laird of Bucklaw. Still, however, he reaped many advantages from his friend's good fortune. Bucklaw, who had never been at all scrupulous in choosing his companions, was accustomed to, and entertained by a fellow, whom he could either laugh with, or laugh at, as he had a mind, who would take, according to Scottish phrase, "the bit and the buffet," understood all sports, whether within or without doors, and, when the laird had a mind for a bottle of wine (no infrequent circumstance), was always ready to save him from the scandal of getting drunk by himself. Upon these terms Craigengelt was the frequent, almost the constant, inmate of the house of Girnington.

In no time, and under no possibility of circumstances could good have been derived from such an intimacy, however its bad consequences might be qualified by the thorough knowledge which Bucklaw possessed of his dependant's character, and the high contempt in which he held it. But as circumstances stood, this evil communication was particularly liable to corrupt what good principles nature had implanted in the patron.

Craigengelt had never forgiven the scorn with which Ravenswood had torn the mask of courage and honesty from his countenance; and to exasperate Bucklaw's resentment against him, was the safest mode of revenge that occurred to his cowardly, yet cunning and malignant disposition.

He brought up, on all occasions, the story of the challenge which Ravenswood had declined to accept, and endeavored, by every possible **insinuation**, to make his patron believe that his honor was concerned in bringing that matter to an issue by a present discussion with Ravenswood. But respecting his subject, Bucklaw imposed on him, at length, a peremptory command of silence.

"I think," he said, "the Master has treated me unlike a gentleman, and I see no right he had to send me back a cavalier answer when I demanded the satisfaction of one—But he gave me my life once—and, in looking the matter over at present, I put myself but on equal terms with him. Should he cross me again, I shall consider the old account as balanced, and his Mastership will do well to look to himself."

"That he should," re-echoed Craigengelt; "for when you are in practise, Bucklaw, I would bet a magnum you are through him before the third pass,"

"Then you know nothing of the matter," said Bucklaw, "and you never saw him fence."

"And I know nothing of the matter?" said the dependant—"a good jest, I promise you!—and though I never saw Ravenswood fence, have I not been at Monsieur Sagoon's school, who was the first *maître d'armes* at Paris; and have I not been at Signor Poco's at Florence, and Meinheer Durchstossen's at Vienna, and have I not seen all their play?"

"I don't know whether you have or not," said Bucklaw; "but what about it, though you had?"

"Only that I will be d—d if ever I saw French, Italian, or High-Dutchman, ever make foot, hand, and eye, keep time half so well as you, Bucklaw."

"I believe you lie, Craigie," said Bucklaw; "however, I can hold my own both with single rapier, backsword, sword and dagger, broadsword, or case of falchions—and that's as much as any gentleman need know of the matter."

"And the double of what ninety-nine out of a hundred know," said Craigengelt; "they learn to change a few thrusts with the small sword, and then, forsooth, they understand the noble art of defence! Now, when I was at Rouen in the year 1695, there was a Chevalier de Chapon and I went to the Opera, where we found three bits of English birkies"—

"Is it a long story you are going to tell?" said Bucklaw, interrupting him without ceremony.

"Just as you like," answered the parasite, "for we made short work of it."

"Then I like it short," said Bucklaw; "is it serious or merry?"

"Devilish serious, I assure you, and so they found it; for the Chevalier and I"—

"Then I don't like it at all," said Bucklaw; "so fill a brimmer of my auld auntie's claret, rest her heart! And as the Hielandman says *Skioch doch na skiail*."*

"That was what tough old Sir Evan Dhu used to say to me when I was out with the metal'd lads in 1689. 'Craigengelt,' he used to say, 'you are as pretty a fellow as ever held steel in his grip, but you have one fault.'"

"If he had known you as long as I have done," said Bucklaw, "he would have found out some twenty more; but hang long stories, give us your toast, man."

Craigengelt rose, went on tiptoe to the door, peeped out, shut it carefully, came back again—clapped his tarnished gold

* "Cut a drink with a tale;" equivalent to the English adage of *boon companions*, "Don't preach over your liquor."

laced hat on one side of his head, took his glass in one hand, and touching the hilt of his hanger with the other, named, "The King over the water."

"I tell you what it is, Captain Craigenfelt," said Bucklaw; "I shall keep my mind to myself on these subjects, having too much respect for the memory of my venerable aunt Girnington to put her lands and tenements in the way of committing treason against established authority. Bring me King James to Edinburgh, Captain, with thirty thousand men at his back, and I'll tell you what I think about his title; but as for running my neck into a noose, and my good broad lands into the statutory penalties 'in that case made and provided,' rely upon it, you will find me no such fool. So, when you mean to vapor with your hanger and your dram-cup in support of treasonable toasts, you must find your liquor and company elsewhere."

"Well, then," said Craigenfelt, "name the toast yourself, and be it what it like, I'll pledge you, were it a mile to the bottom."

"And I'll give you a toast that deserves it, my boy," said Bucklaw; "what say you to Miss Lucy Ashton?"

"Up with it," said the Captain, as he tossed off his brimmer, "the bonniest lass in Lothian. What a pity the old sneck-drawing whigamore, her father, is about to throw her away upon that rag of pride and beggary, the Master of Ravenswood!"

"That's not quite so clear," said Bucklaw, in a tone which, though it seemed indifferent, excited his companion's eager curiosity; and not that only, but also his hope of working himself into some sort of confidence, which might make him necessary to his patron, being by no means satisfied to rest on mere sufferance, if he could form by art or industry a more permanent title to his favor.

"I thought," said he, after a moment's pause, "that was a settled matter—they are continually together, and nothing else is spoken of betwixt Lammerlaw and Taprain."

"They may say what they please," replied his patron, "but I know better; and I'll give you Miss Lucy Ashton's health again, my boy."

"And I would drink it on my knee," said Craigenfelt, "if I thought the girl had the spirit to jilt that d—d son of a Spaniard."

"I am to request you will not use the word jilt and Miss Ashton's name together," said Bucklaw, gravely.

"Jilt, did I say?—discard, my lad of acres—by Jove, I meant to say discard," replied Craigenfelt; "and I hope she'll

discard him like a small card at piquet, and take in the King of Hearts, my boy!—But yet ”——

“But what?” said his patron.

“But yet I know for certain they are hours together alone, and in the woods and the fields.”

“That’s her foolish father’s dotage—that will be soon put out of the lass’s head, if it ever gets into it,” answered Bucklaw. “And now fill your glass again, Captain, I am going to make you happy—I am going to let you into a secret—a plot—a noosing plot—only the noose is but typical.”

“A marrying matter?” said Craigengelt, and his jaw fell as he asked the question; for he suspected that matrimony would render his situation at Girnington much more precarious than during the jolly days of his patron’s bachelorhood.

“Ay, a marriage, man,” said Bucklaw; but wherefore droops thy mighty spirit, and why grow the rubies on thy cheek so pale? The board will have a corner, and the corner will have a trencher, and the trencher will have a glass beside it; and the board-end shall be filled, and the trencher and the glass shall be replenished for thee, if all the petticoats in Lothian had sworn the contrary—What, man! I am not the boy to put myself into leading-strings?”

“So says many an honest fellow,” said Craigengelt, “and some of my special friends; but, curse me if I know the reason, the women could never bear me, and always contrived to trundle me out of favor before the honeymoon was over.”

“If you could have kept your ground till that was over, you might have made a good year’s pension,” said Bucklaw.

“But I never could,” answered the dejected parasite; “there was my Lord Castle-Cuddy—we were hand and glove—I rode his horses—borrowed money, both for him and from him—trained his hawks, and taught him how to lay his bets; and when he took a fancy of marrying, I married him to Katie Glegg, whom I thought myself as sure of as man could be of woman. Egad, she had me out of the house, as if I had run on wheels, within the first fortnight!”

“Well!” replied Bucklaw, “I think I have nothing of Castle-Cuddy about me, or Lucy of Katie Glegg. But you see the thing will go on whether you like it or no—the only question is, will you be useful?”

“Useful!” exclaimed the Captain;—“and to thee, my lad of lands, my darling boy, whom I would tramp barefooted through the world for!—name time, place, mode, and circumstances, and see if I will not be useful in all uses that can be devised.”

"Why then, you must ride two hundred miles for me," said the patron.

"A thousand, and call them a flea's leap," answered the dependant; "I'll cause saddle my horse directly."

"Better stay till you know where you are to go, and what you are to do," quoth Bucklaw. "You know I have a kinswoman in Northumberland, Lady Blenkinsop by name, whose old acquaintance I had the misfortune to lose in the period of my poverty, but the light of whose countenance shone forth upon me when the sun of my prosperity began to arise."

"D—n all such double-faced jades!" exclaimed Craigenelt, heroically; "this I will say for John Craigenelt, that he is his friend's friend through good report and bad report, poverty and riches; and you know something of that yourself, Bucklaw."

"I have not forgot your merits," said his patron; "I do remember, that, in my extremities, you had a mind to *crimp* me for the service of the French king, or of the Pretender; and, moreover, that you afterward lent me a score of pieces, when, as I firmly believe, you had heard the news that old Lady Gyrnington had a touch of the dead palsy. But don't be downcast, John; I believe, after all, you like me very well in your way, and it is my misfortune to have no better counselor at present. To return to this Lady Blenkinsop, you must know she is a close confederate of Duchess Sarah."

"What! of Sall Jennings?" exclaimed Craigenelt; "then she must be a good one."

"Hold your tongue, and keep your Tory rants to yourself, if it be possible," said Bucklaw; "I tell you, that through the Duchess of Marlborough has this Northumbrian cousin of mine become a crony of Lady Ashton, the Keeper's wife, or, I may say, the Lord Keeper's Lady Keeper, and she has favored Lady Blenkinsop with a visit on her return from London, and is just now at her old mansion-house on the banks of the Wansbeck. Now, sir, as it has been the use and wont of these ladies to consider their husbands as of no importance in the management of their own families, it has been their present pleasure, without consulting Sir William Ashton, to put on the *tapis* a matrimonial alliance, to be concluded between Lucy Ashton, and my own right honorable self, Lady Ashton acting a self-constituted plenipotentiary on the part of her daughter and husband and Mother Blenkinsop, equally unaccredited, doing me the honor to be my representative. You may suppose I was a little astonished when I found that a treaty, in which I was so considerably interested, had advanced a good way before I was even consulted."

"Capot' me if I think that was according to the rules of the game," said his confidant; "and pray, what answer did you return?"

"Why, my first thought was to send the treaty to the devil, and the negotiators along with it, for a couple of meddling old women; my next was to laugh very heartily; and my third and last was a settled opinion that the thing was reasonable, and would suit me well enough."

"Why, I thought you had never seen the wench but once—and then she had her riding-mask on—I am sure you told me so."

"Ay—but I liked her very well then. And Ravenswood's dirty usage of me—shutting me out of doors to dine with the lackeys, because he had the Lord Keeper, forsooth, and his daughter, to be guests in his beggarly castle of starvation—D—n me, Craigengelt, if I ever forgive him till I play him as good a trick!"

"No more you should, if you are a lad of metal," said Craigengelt, the matter now taking a turn in which he could sympathize; "and if you carry this wench from him, it will break his heart."

"That it will not," said Bucklaw; "his heart is all steeled over with reason and philosophy—things that you, Craigie, know nothing about more than myself, God help me—But it will break his pride, though, and that's what I'm driving at."

"Distance me," said Craigengelt, "but I know the reason now of his unmannerly behavior at his old tumble-down tower yonder—Ashamed of your company?—no, no!—Gad, he was afraid you would cut in and carry off the girl."

"Eh! Craigengelt?" said Bucklaw—"do you really think so?—but no, no!—he is a devilish deal prettier man than I am."

"Who—he?" exclaimed the parasite—"he's as black as the crook; and for his size—he's a tall fellow, to be sure—but give me a light, stout, middle-sized"—

"Plague on thee!" said Bucklaw, interrupting him, "and on me for listening to you,—you would say as much if I were hunch-backed. But as to Ravenswood—he has kept no terms with me—I'll keep none with him—if I *can* win this girl from him, I *will* win her."

"Win her?—'sblood, you *shall* win her, point, quint, and quatorze, my king of trumps—you shall pique, repique, and capot him."

"Prithee, stop thy gambling cant for one instant," said Bucklaw. "Things have come thus far, that I have entertained

the proposal of my kinswoman, agreed to the terms of jointure, amount of fortune, and so forth, and that the affair is to go forward when Lady Ashton comes down, for she takes her daughter and her son in her own hand. Now they want me to send up a confidential person with some writings."

"By this good wine, I'll ride to the end of the world—the very gates of Jericho, and the judgment-seat of Prester John, for thee!" ejaculated the Captain.

"Why, I believe you would do something for me, and a great deal for yourself. Now, any one could carry the writings; but you will have a little more to do. You must contrive to drop out before my Lady Ashton, just as if it were a matter of little consequence, the residence of Ravenswood at her husband's house, and his close intercourse with Miss Ashton; and you may tell her, that all the country talks of a visit from the Marquis of A——, as it is supposed, to make up the match betwixt Ravenswood and her daughter. I should like to hear what she says to all this; for, rat me, if I have any idea of starting for the plate at all, if Ravenswood is to win the race, and he has odds against me already."

"Never a bit—the wench has too much sense—and in that belief I drink her health a third time; and, were time and place fitting, I would drink it on bended knees, and he that would not pledge me, I would make his guts garter his stockings."

"Hark ye, Craigengelt; as you are going into the society of women of rank," said Bucklaw, "I'll thank you to forget your strange blackguard oaths and damme's—I'll write to them, though, that you are a blunt untaught fellow."

"Ay, ay," replied Craigengelt; "a plain, blunt, honest, downright soldier."

"Not too honest, nor too much of the soldier neither; but such as thou art, it is my luck to need thee, for I must have spurs put to Lady Ashton's motions."

"I'll dash them up to the rowel-heads," said Craigengelt; "she shall come here at the gallop, like a cow chased by a whole nest of hornets, and her tail twisted over her rump like a cork-screw."

"And hear ye, Craigie," said Bucklaw; "your boots and doublet are good enough to drink in, as the man says in the play, but they are somewhat too greasy for tea-table service—prithee, get thyself a little better rigged out, and here is to pay all charges."

"Nay, Bucklaw—on my soul, man—you use me ill—How-

ever," added Craigenfelt, pocketing the money, "if you will have me so far indebted to you, I must be conforming."

"Well, horse and away!" said the patron, "so soon as you have got your riding livery in trim. You may ride the black crop-car—and, hark ye, I'll make you a present of him to boot."

"I drink to the good luck of my mission," answered the ambassador, "in a half-pint bumper."

"I thank ye, Craigie, and pledge you—I see nothing against it but the father or the girl taking a tantrum, and I am told the mother can wind them both round her little finger. Take care not to affront her with any of your Jacobite jargon."

"O ay, true—she is a whig, and a friend of old Sall of Marlborough—thank my stars, I can hoist any colors at a pinch. I have fought as hard under John Churchill as ever I did under Dundee or the Duke of Berwick."

"I verily believe you, Craigie," said the lord of the mansion: "but, Craigie, do you, pray, step down to the cellar, and fetch us up a bottle of the Burgundy, 1678—it is in the fourth bin from the right-hand turn—And I say, Craigie, you may fetch up half-a-dozen whilst you are about it—Egad, we'll, make a night on't!"

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIRST.

And soon they spied the merry-men green,
And eke the coach and four.

DUKE UPON DUKE.

CRAIGENGELT set forth on his mission so soon as his equipage was complete, prosecuted his journey with all diligence, and accomplished his commission with all the dexterity for which Bucklaw had given him credit. As he arrived with credentials from Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw, he was extremely welcome to both ladies; and those who are prejudiced in favor of a new acquaintance can, for a time at least, discover excellencies in his very faults, and perfections in his deficiencies. Although both ladies were accustomed to good society, yet, being predetermined to find out an agreeable and well behaved gentleman in Mr. Hayston's friend, they succeeded wonderfully in imposing on themselves. It is true that Craigenfelt was now handsomely dressed, and that was a point of no small consequence. But, independent of outward show, black-guard impudence of address was construed into honorable

bluntness, becoming his supposed military profession; his hectoring passed for courage, and his sauciness for wit. Lest, however, any one should think this a violation of probability, we must add, in fairness to the two ladies, that their discernment was greatly blinded, and their favor propitiated, by the opportune arrival of Captain Craigenfelt in the moment when they were longing for a third hand to make a party at tredrille, in which, as in all games, whether of chance or skill, that worthy person was a great proficient.

When he found himself established in favor, his next point was how best to use it for the futherance of his patron's views. He found Lady Ashton prepossessed strongly in favor of the motion, which Lady Blenkinsop, partly from regard to her kinsman, partly from the spirit of match-making, had not hesitated to propose to her; so that his task was an easy one. Bucklaw, reformed from his prodigality, was just the sort of husband which she desired to have for her Shepherdess of Lammermoor; and while the marriage gave her an easy fortune, and a respectable country gentleman for her husband, Lady Ashton was of opinion that her destinies would be fully and most favorably accomplished. It so chanced, also, that Bucklaw, among his new acquisitions, had gained the management of a little political interest in a neighboring county, where the Douglas family originally held large possessions. It was one of the bosom-hopes of Lady Ashton, that her eldest son Sholto, should represent this county in the British Parliament, and she saw this alliance with Bucklaw as a circumstance which might be highly favorable to her wishes.

Craigenfelt, who in his way by no means wanted sagacity, no sooner discovered in what quarter the wind of Lady Ashton's wishes sate, than he trimmed his course accordingly. "There was little to prevent Bucklaw himself from sitting for the county—he must carry the heat—must walk the course. Two cousins-german—six more distant kinsmen, his factor and his chamberlain, were all hollow votes—and the Girnington interest had always carried, betwixt love and fear, about as many more. But Bucklaw cared no more about riding the first horse, and that sort of thing, than he, Craigenfelt, did about a game at birkie—it was a pity his interest was not in good guidance."

All this Lady Ashton drank in with willing and attentive ears, resolving internally to be herself the person who should take the management of the political influence of her destined son-in-law, for the benefit of her eldest born, Sholto, and all other parties concerned.

When he found her ladyship thus favorably disposed, the

Captain proceeded, to use his employer's phrase, to set spurs to her resolution, by hinting at the situation of matters at Ravenswood Castle, the long residence which the heir of that family had made with the Lord Keeper, and the reports which (though he would be d—d ere he gave credit to any of them) had been idly circulated in the neighborhood. It was not the Captain's cue to appear himself to be uneasy on the subject of these rumors; but he easily saw from Lady Ashton's flushed cheek, hesitating voice, and flashing eyes, that she had caught the alarm which he intended to communicate. She had not heard from her husband so often or so regularly as she thought him bound in duty to have written, and of this very interesting intelligence, concerning his visit to the Tower of Wolf's Crag, and the guest whom, with such cordiality, he had received at Ravenswood Castle, he had suffered his lady to remain altogether ignorant, until she now learned it by the chance information of a stranger. Such concealment approached, in her apprehension, to a misprision, at least, of treason, if not to actual rebellion against her matrimonial authority; and in her inward soul did she vow to take vengeance on the Lord Keeper, as on a subject detected in meditating revolt. Her indignation burned the more fiercely, as she found herself obliged to suppress it in presence of Lady Blenkinsop, kinswoman, and of Craigenfelt, the confidential friend of Bucklaw, of whose alliance she now became trebly desirous, since it occurred to her alarmed imagination, that her husband might, in his policy or timidity, prefer that of Ravenswood.

The Captain was engineer enough to discover that the train was fired; and therefore heard in the course of the same day, without the least surprise that Lady Ashton had resolved to abridge her visit to Lady Blenkinsop, and set forth with the peep of morning on her return to Scotland, using all the despatch which the state of the roads, and the mode of traveling, would possibly permit.

Unhappy Lord Keeper!—little was he aware what a storm was traveling toward him in all the speed with which an old-fashioned coach and six could possibly achieve its journey. He, like Don Gayferos, "forgot his lady fair and true," and was only anxious about the expected visit of the Marquis of A—. Soothfast tidings had assured him that this nobleman was at length, and without fail, to honor his castle at one in the afternoon, being a late dinner-hour; and much was the bustle in consequence of the annunciation. The Lord Keeper traversed the chambers, held consultation with the butler in the cellars, and even ventured, at the risk of a *démêlé* with a cook,

of a spirit lofty enough to scorn the admonitions of Lady Ashton herself, to peep into the kitchen. Satisfied, at length, that everything was in as active a train of preparation as was possible, he summoned Ravenswood and his daughter to walk upon the terrace, for the purpose of watching from that commanding position, the earliest symptoms of his lordship's approach. For this purpose, with slow and idle step he paraded the terrace, which, flanked with a heavy stone battlement, stretched in front of the castle upon a level with the first storey; while visitors found access to the court by a projecting gateway, the bartisan or flat-leaded roof of which was accessible from the terrace by an easy flight of low and broad steps. The whole bore a resemblance partly, to a castle, partly to a nobleman's seat; and though calculated, in some respects, for defence, evinced that it had been constructed under a sense of the power and security of the ancient Lords of Ravenswood.

This pleasant walk commanded a beautiful and extensive view. But what was most to our present purpose, there were seen from the terrace two roads, one leading from the east and one from the westward, which crossing a ridge opposed to the eminence on which the castle stood, at different angles, gradually approached each other, until they joined not far from the gate of the avenue. It was to the westward approach that the Lord Keeper, from a sort of fidgeting anxiety, his daughter, from complaisance to him, and Ravenswood, though feeling some symptoms of internal impatience, out of complaisance to his daughter, directed their eyes to see the precursors of the Marquis's approach.

These were not long of presenting themselves. Two running footmen, dressed in white, with black jockey-caps, and long staves in their hands, headed the train; and such was their agility, that they found no difficulty in keeping the necessary advance which the etiquette of their station required, before the carriage and horsemen. Onward they came at a long swinging trot, arguing unwearied speed in their long-breathed calling. Such running footmen are often alluded to in old plays (I would particularly instance "*Middleton's Mad World, my Master*"), and perhaps may be still remembered by some old persons in Scotland, as part of the retinue of the ancient nobility when traveling in full ceremony.* Behind these glancing meteors, who footed it as if the Avenger of Blood had been behind them, came a cloud of dust, raised by riders who preceded, attended, or followed, the state-carriage of the Marquis.

* Note I. Running Footmen.

The privilege of nobility, in those days, had something in it impressive on the imagination. The dresses and liveries, and number of their attendants, their style of traveling, the imposing, and almost warlike air of the armed men who surrounded them, placed them far above the laird, who traveled with his brace of footmen, and as to rivalry from the mercantile part of the community, these would as soon have thought of imitating the state equipage of the Sovereign. At present it is different; and I myself, Peter Pattieson, in a late journey to Edinburgh, had the honor, in the mail-coach phrase, to "change a leg" with a peer of the realm. It was not so in the days of which I write; and the Marquis's approach, so long expected in vain, now took place in the full pomp of ancient aristocracy. Sir William Ashton was so much interested in what he beheld and in considering the ceremonial of reception in case any circumstance had been omitted, that he scarce heard his son Henry exclaim, "There is another coach and six coming down the east road, papa—can they both belong to the Marquis of A——?"

At length, when the youngster had fairly compelled his attention by pulling his sleeve,

He turn'd his eyes, and, as he turn'd, survey'd
An awful vision

Sure enough, another coach and six, with four servants or out-riders in attendance, was descending the hill from the eastward, at such a pace as made it doubtful which of the carriages thus approaching from different quarters would first reach the gate at the extremity of the avenue. The one coach was green, the other blue; and not the green and blue chariots in the Circus of Rome or Constantinople excited more turmoil among the citizens than the double apparition occasioned in the mind of the Lord Keeper. We all remember the terrible exclamation of the dying profligate, when a friend, to destroy what he supposed the hypochondriac idea of a spectre appearing in a certain shape at a given hour, placed before him a person dressed up in the manner he described. "*Mon Dieu!*" said the expiring sinner, who, it seems, saw both the real and polygraphic apparition—" *il y en a deux!* "

The surprise of the Lord Keeper was scarcely less unpleasant at the duplication of the expected arrival; his mind misgave him strangely. There was no neighbor who would have approached so unceremoniously, at a time when ceremony was held in such respect. It must be Lady Ashton, said his conscience, and followed up the hint with an anxious anticipation

of the purpose of her sudden and unannounced return. He felt that he was caught "in the manner." That the company in which she had so unluckily surprised him was likely to be highly distasteful to her, there was no question; and the only hope which remained for him was her high sense of dignified propriety, which, he trusted, might prevent a public explosion. But so active were his doubts and fears, as altogether to derange his purposed ceremonial for the reception of the Marquis.

These feelings of apprehension were not confined to Sir William Ashton. "It is my mother—it is my mother!" said Lucy, turning as pale as ashes, and clasping her hands together as she looked at Ravenswood.

"And if it be Lady Ashton," said her lover to her in a low tone, "what can be the occasion of such alarm?—Surely the return of a lady of the family from which she has been so long absent, should excite other sensations than those of fear and dismay."

"You do not know my mother," said Miss Ashton, in a tone almost breathless with terror; "what will she say when she sees you in this place!"

"My stay has been too long," said Ravenswood, somewhat haughtily, "if her displeasure at my presence is likely to be so formidable. My dear Lucy," he resumed, in a tone of soothing encouragement, "you are too childishly afraid of Lady Ashton; she is a woman of family—a lady of fashion—a person who must know the world, and what is due to her husband and her husband's guests."

Lucy shook her head; and, as if her mother, still at the distance of half-a-mile, could have seen and scrutinized her deportment, she withdrew herself from beside Ravenswood, and taking her brother Henry's arm, led him to a different part of the terrace. The Keeper also shuffled down toward the portal of the great gate, without inviting Ravenswood to accompany him, and thus he remained standing alone on the terrace, deserted and shunned, as it were, by the inhabitants of the mansion.

This suited not the mood of one who was proud in proportion to his poverty, and who thought that, in sacrificing his deep-rooted sentiments so far as to become Sir William Ashton's guest, he conferred a favor and received none. "I can forgive Lucy," he said to himself; "she is young, timid, and conscious of an important engagement assumed without her mother's sanction; yet she should remember with whom it has been assumed, and leave me no reason to suspect that she is ashamed of her choice. For the Keeper, sense, spirit, and expression

seem to have left his face and manner since he had the first glimpse of Lady Ashton's carriage. I must watch how this is to end; and, if they give me reason to think myself an unwelcome guest, my visit is soon abridged."

With these suspicions floating on his mind, he left the terrace, and walking toward the stables of the castle, gave directions that his horse should be kept in readiness, in case he should have occasion to ride abroad.

In the meanwhile the drivers of the two carriages, the approach of which had occasioned so much dismay at the castle, had become aware of each other's presence, as they approached upon different lines to the head of the avenue, as a common centre. Lady Ashton's driver and postillions instantly received orders to get foremost, if possible, her ladyship being desirous of despatching her first interview with her husband before the arrival of these guests, whoever they might happen to be. On the other hand, the coachman of the Marquis, conscious of his own dignity and that of his master, and observing the rival charioteer was mending his pace, resolved, like a true brother of the whip, whether ancient or modern, to vindicate his right of precedence. So that, to increase the confusion of the Lord Keeper's understanding, he saw the short time which remained for consideration abridged by the haste of the contending coachmen, who, fixing their eyes sternly on each other, and applying the lash smartly to their horses, began to thunder down the descent with emulous rapidity, while the horsemen who attended them were forced to put on to a hand-gallop.

Sir William's only chance now remaining was the possibility of an overturn, and that his lady or visitor might break their necks. I am not aware that he formed any distinct wish on the subject, but I have no reason to think that his grief in either case would have been altogether inconsolable. This chance, however, also disappeared; for Lady Ashton, though insensible to fear, began to see the ridicule of running a race with a visitor of distinction, the goal being the portal of her own castle, and commanded her coachman, as they approached the avenue, to slacken his pace, and allow precedence to the stranger's equipage; a command which he gladly obeyed, as coming in time to save his honor, the horses of the Marquis's carriage being better, or, at least, fresher than his own. He restrained his pace, therefore, and suffered the green coach to enter the avenue, with all its retinue, which pass it occupied with the speed of a whirlwind. The Marquis's laced charioteer no sooner found the *pas d'avance* was granted to him, than he resumed a more deliberate pace, at which he advanced under

the embowering shade of the lofty elms, surrounded by all the attendants ; while the carriage of Lady Ashton followed, still more slowly, at some distance.

In the front of the castle, and beneath the portal which admitted guests into the inner court, stood Sir William Ashton, much perplexed in mind, his younger son and daughter beside him, and in their rear a train of attendants of various ranks, in and out of livery. The nobility and gentry of Scotland, at this period, were remarkable even to extravagance for the number of their servants, whose services were easily purchased in a country where men were numerous beyond proportion to the means of employing them.

The manners of a man, trained like Sir William Ashton, are too much at his command to remain long disconcerted with the most adverse concurrence of circumstances. He received the Marquis, as he alighted from his equipage, with the usual compliments of welcome ; and, as he ushered him into the great hall, expressed his hope that his journey had been pleasant. The Marquis was a tall, well-made man, with a thoughtful and intelligent countenance, and an eye, in which the fire of ambition had for some years replaced the vivacity of youth ; a bold, proud expression of countenance, yet chastened by habitual caution, and the desire which, as the head of a party, he necessarily entertained of acquiring popularity. He answered with courtesy the courteous inquiries of the Lord Keeper, and was formally presented to Miss Ashton, in the course of which ceremony the Lord Keeper gave the first symptoms of what was chiefly occupying his mind, by introducing his daughter as “ his wife, Lady Ashton.”

Lucy blushed ; the Marquis looked surprised at the extremely juvenile appearance of his hostess, and the Lord Keeper with difficulty rallied himself so far as to explain. “ I should have said my daughter, my lord ; but the truth is, that I saw Lady Ashton’s carriage enter the avenue shortly after your lordship’s, and ”——

“ Make no apology, my lord,” replied his noble guest ; “ let me entreat you will wait on your lady, and leave me to cultivate Miss Ashton’s acquaintance. I am shocked my people should have taken precedence of our hostess at her own gate ; but your lordship is aware that I supposed Lady Ashton was still in the south. Permit me to beseech you will waive ceremony, and hasten to welcome her.”

This was precisely what the Lord Keeper longed to do ; and he instantly profited by his lordship’s obliging permission. To see Lady Ashton and encounter the first burst of her displeas-

ure in private, might prepare her, in some degree, to receive her unwelcome guests with due decorum. As her carriage, therefore, stopped, the arm of the attentive husband was ready to assist Lady Ashton in dismounting. Looking as if she saw him not, she put his arm aside, and requested that of Captain Craiengelt, who stood by the coach with his laced hat under his arm, having acted as *cavaliere servente*, or squire in attendance, during the journey. Taking hold of this respectable person's arm as if to support her, Lady Ashton traversed the court, uttering a word or two by the way of direction to the servants, but not one to Sir William, who in vain endeavored to attract her attention, as he rather followed than accompanied her into the hall, in which they found the Marquis in close conversation with the Master of Ravenswood: Lucy had taken the first opportunity of escaping. There was embarrassment on every countenance except that of the Marquis of A——; for even Craiengelt's impudence was hardly able to veil his fear of Ravenswood, and the rest felt the awkwardness of the position in which they were thus unexpectedly placed.

After waiting a moment to be presented by Sir William Ashton, the Marquis resolved to introduce himself. "The Lord Keeper," he said, bowing to Lady Ashton, "has just introduced to me his daughter as his wife—he might very easily present Lady Ashton as his daughter, so little does she differ from what I remember her some years since.—Will she permit an old acquaintance the privilege of a guest?"

He saluted the lady with too good a grace to apprehend a repulse, and then proceeded—"This, Lady Ashton, is a peace-making visit, and therefore I presume to introduce my cousin, the young Master of Ravenswood, to your favorable notice."

Lady Ashton could not choose but courtesy; but there was in her obeisance an air of haughtiness approaching to contemptuous repulse. Ravenswood could not choose but bow; but his manner returned the scorn with which he had been greeted.

"Allow me," she said, "to present to your lordship *my* friend." Craiengelt, with the forward impudence which men of his cast mistake for ease, made a sliding bow to the Marquis, which he graced by a flourish of his gold-laced hat. The lady turned to her husband—"You and I, Sir William," she said, and these were the first words she had addressed to him, "have acquired new acquaintances since we parted—let me introduce the acquisition I have made to mine—Captain Craiengelt."

Another bow, and another flourish of the gold-laced hat, which was returned by the Lord Keeper without intimation of former recognition, and with that sort of anxious readiness,

which intimated his wish, that peace and amnesty should take place betwixt the contending parties, including the auxiliaries on both sides. "Let me introduce you to the Master of Ravenswood," said he to Captain Craigengelt, following up the same amicable system. But the Master drew up his tall form to the full extent of his height, and without so much as looking toward the person thus introduced to him, he said, in a marked tone, "Captain Craigengelt and I are already perfectly well acquainted with each other."

"Perfectly—perfectly," replied the Captain, in a mumbling tone, like that of a double echo, and with a flourish of his hat, the circumference of which was greatly abridged, compared with those which had so cordially graced his introduction to the Marquis and the Lord Keeper.

Lockhard, followed by three menials, now entered with wine and refreshments, which it was the fashion to offer as a whet before dinner; and when they were placed before the guests, Lady Ashton made an apology for withdrawing her husband from them for some minutes upon business of special import. The Marquis, of course, requested her ladyship would lay herself under no restraint; and Craigengelt, bolting with speed a second glass of racy Canary, hastened to leave the room, feeling no great pleasure in the prospect of being left alone with the Marquis of A—— and the Master of Ravenswood, the presence of the former holding him in awe, and that of the latter in bodily terror.

Some arrangements about his horse and baggage formed the pretext for his sudden retreat, in which he persevered, although Lady Ashton gave Lockhard orders to be careful, most particularly to accommodate Captain Craigengelt with all the attendance which he could possibly require. The Marquis and the Master of Ravenswood were thus left to communicate to each other their remarks upon the reception which they had met with, while Lady Ashton led the way, and her lord followed, somewhat like a condemned criminal, to her ladyship's dressing-room.

So soon as the spouses had both entered, her ladyship gave way to that fierce audacity of temper, which she had with difficulty suppressed, out of respect to appearances. She shut the door behind the alarmed Lord Keeper, took the key out of the spring-lock, and with a countenance which years had not bereft of its haughty charms, and eyes which spoke at once resolution and resentment, she addressed her astounded husband in these words:—"My lord, I am not greatly surprised at the connections you have been pleased to form during my absence—they

are entirely in conformity with your birth and breeding ; and if I did expect anything else, I heartily own my error, and that I merit, by having done so, the disappointment you had prepared for me."

"My dear Lady Ashton—my dear Eleanor," said the Lord Keeper, "listen to reason for a moment, and I will convince you I have acted with all the regard due to the dignity, as well as the interest, of my family."

"To the interest of *your* family I conceive you perfectly capable of attending," returned the indignant lady, "and even to the dignity of your own family also, as far as it requires any looking after—But as mine happens to be inextricably involved with it, you will excuse me if I choose to give my own attention so far as that is concerned."

"What would you have, Lady Ashton?" said the husband—"What is it that displeases you? Why is it that, on your return after so long an absence, I am arraigned in this manner?"

"Ask your own conscience, Sir William, what has prompted you to become a renegade to your political party and opinions, and led you, for what I know, to be on the point of marrying your only daughter to a beggarly Jacobite bankrupt, the inveterate enemy of your family to the boot."

"Why, what in the name of common sense and civility, would you have me do, madam?" answered her husband—"Is it possible for me, with ordinary decency, to turn a young gentleman out of my house, who saved my daughter's life and my own, but the other morning as it were?"

"Saved your life! I have heard of that story," said the lady—"the Lord Keeper was scared by a dun cow, and he takes the young fellow who killed her for Guy of Warwick—any butcher from Haddington may soon have an equal claim on your hospitality."

"Lady Ashton," stammered the Keeper, "this is intolerable—and when I am desirous, too, to make you easy by any sacrifice—if you would but tell me what you would be at."

"Go down to your guests," said the imperious dame, "and make your apology to Ravenswood, that the arrival of Captain Craigenfelt and some other friends, renders it impossible for you to offer him lodgings at the castle—I expect young Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw."

"Good heavens, madam!" ejaculated her husband—"Ravenswood to give place to Craigenfelt, a common gambler and an informer!—It was all I could do to forbear desiring the fellow to get out of my house, and I was much surprised to see him in your ladyship's train."

"Since you saw him there, you might be well assured," answered this meek helpmate, "that he was proper society. As to this Ravenswood, he only meets with the treatment which, to my certain knowledge, he gave to a much-valued friend of mine, who had the misfortune to be his guest some time since. But take your resolution ; for, if Ravenswood does not quit the house, I will."

Sir William Ashton paced up and down the apartment in the most distressing agitation ; fear, and shame, and anger, contending against the habitual deference he was in the use of rendering to his lady. At length it ended, as is usual with timid minds placed in such circumstances, in his adopting a *mezzo termine*, a middle measure.

"I tell you frankly, madam, I neither can nor will be guilty of the incivility you propose to the Master of Ravenswood—he has not deserved it at my hand. If you will be so unreasonable as to insult a man of quality under your own roof, I cannot prevent you ; but I will not at least be the agent in such a preposterous proceeding."

"You will not?" asked the lady.

"No, by heavens, madam !" her husband replied ; "ask me anything congruent with common decency, as to drop his acquaintance by degrees, or the like—but to bid him leave my house is what I will not, and cannot consent to."

"Then the task of supporting the honor of the family will fall on me, as it has often done before," said the lady.

She sat down, and hastily wrote a few lines. The Lord Keeper made another effort to prevent her taking a step so decisive, just as she opened the door to call her female attendant from the anteroom. "Think what you are doing, Lady Ashton—you are making a mortal enemy of a young man, who is like to have the means of harming us"—

"Did you ever know a Douglas who feared an enemy?" answered the lady contemptuously.

"Ay, but he is as proud and vindictive as a hundred Douglasses, and a hundred devils to boot. Think of it for a night only."

"Not for another moment," answered the lady ;—"here, Mrs. Patullo, give this billet to young Ravenswood."

"To the Master, madam?" said Mrs. Patullo.

"Ay, to the Master, if you call him so."

"I wash my hands of it entirely," said the Keeper, "and I shall go down into the garden, and see that Jardine gathers the winter fruit for the dessert."

"Do so," said the lady, looking after him with glances of

infinite contempt : "and thank God that you leave one behind you as fit to protect the honor of the family, as you are to look after pippins and pears."

The Lord Keeper remained long enough in the garden to give her Ladyship's mind time to explode, and to let, as he thought, at least the first violence of Ravenswood's displeasure blow over. When he entered the hall, he found the Marquis of A—— giving orders to some of his attendants. He seemed in high displeasure, and interrupted an apology which Sir William had commenced, for having left his lordship alone.

"I presume, Sir William, you are no stranger to this singular billet with which my kinsman of Ravenswood" (an emphasis on the word *my*) "has been favored by your lady—and, of course, that you are prepared to receive my adieus—My kinsman is already gone, having thought it unnecessary to offer any on his part, since all former civilities had been canceled by this singular insult."

"I protest, my lord," said Sir William, holding the billet in his hand, "I am not privy to the contents of this letter. I know Lady Ashton is a warm-tempered and prejudiced woman, and I am sincerely sorry for any offence that has been given or taken ; but I hope your Lordship will consider that a lady"—

"Should bear herself toward persons of a certain rank with the breeding of one," said the Marquis, completing the half-uttered sentence.

"True, my lord," said the unfortunate Keeper ; "but Lady Ashton is still a woman"—

"And as such, methinks," said the Marquis, again interrupting him, "should be taught the duties which correspond to her station. But here she comes, and I will learn from her own mouth the reason of this extraordinary and unexpected affront offered to my near relation, while both he and I were her ladyship's guests.

Lady Ashton accordingly entered the apartment at this moment. Her dispute with Sir William, and a subsequent interview with her daughter, had not prevented her from attending to the duties of her toilette. She appeared in full dress, and, from the character of her countenance and manner, well became the splendor with which ladies of quality then appeared on such occasions.

The Marquis of A—— bowed haughtily, and she returned the salute with equal pride and distance of demeanor. He then took from the passive hand of Sir William Ashton the billet he had given him the moment before he approached the lady, and was about to speak, when she interrupted him. "I

perceive, my lord, you are about to enter upon an unpleasant subject. I am sorry any such should have occurred at this time, to interrupt, in the slightest degree, the respectful reception due to your lordship—but so it is.—Mr. Edgar Ravenswood, for whom I have addressed the billet in your lordship's hand, has abused the hospitality of this family, and Sir William Ashton's softness of temper, in order to seduce a young person into engagements without her parents' consent, and of which they never can approve."

Both gentlemen answered at once,—“My kinsman is incapable”——said the Lord Marquis.

“I am confident that my daughter Lucy is still more incapable”——said the Lord Keeper.

Lady Ashton at once interrupted, and replied to them both.—“My Lord Marquis, your kinsman, if Mr. Ravenswood has the honor to be so, has made the attempt privately to secure the affections of this young and inexperienced girl. Sir William Ashton, your daughter has been simple enough to give more encouragement than she ought to have done to so very improper a suitor.”

“And I think, madam,” said the Lord Keeper, losing his accustomed temper and patience, “that if you had nothing better to tell us, you had better have kept this family secret to yourself also.”

“You will pardon me, Sir William,” said the lady, calmly; “the noble Marquis has the right to know the cause of the treatment I have found it necessary to use to a gentleman whom he calls his blood-relation.”

“It is a cause,” muttered the Lord Keeper, “which has emerged since the effect has taken place; for if it exists at all, I am sure she knew nothing of it when her letter to Ravenswood was written.

“It is the first time that I have heard of this,” said the Marquis; “but since your ladyship has tabled a subject so delicate, permit me to say, that my kinsman's birth and connections entitled him to a patient hearing, and at least a civil refusal, even in case of his being so ambitious as to raise his eyes to the daughter of Sir William Ashton.”

“You will recollect, my lord, of what blood Miss Lucy Ashton is come by the mother's side,” said the lady.

“I do remember your descent—from a younger branch of the house of Angus,” said the Marquis—“and your ladyship—forgive me, lady—ought not to forget that the Ravenswoods have thrice intermarried with the main stem. Come, madam—I know how matters stand—old and long fostered prejudices

are difficult to get over—I make every allowance for them—I ought not, and I would not otherwise have suffered my kinsman to depart alone, expelled, in a manner, from this house—but I had hopes of being a mediator. I am still unwilling to leave you in anger—and shall not set forward until after noon, as I rejoin the Master of Ravenswood upon the road a few miles from hence. Let us talk over this matter more coolly.”

“It is what I anxiously desire, my lord,” said Sir William Ashton eagerly. “Lady Ashton, we will not permit my Lord of A—— to leave us in displeasure. We must compel him to tarry dinner at the castle.”

“The castle,” said the lady, “and all that it contains, are at the command of the Marquis, so long as he chooses to honor it with his residence ; but touching the further discussion of this disagreeable topic”——

“Pardon me, good madam,” said the Marquis, “but I cannot allow you to express any hasty resolution on a subject so important. I see that more company is arriving ; and since I have the good fortune to renew my former acquaintance with Lady Ashton, I hope she will give me leave to avoid periling what I prize so highly upon any disagreeable subject of discussion—at least, till we have talked over more pleasant topics.”

The lady smiled, courtesied, and gave her hand to the Marquis, by whom, with all the formal gallantry of the time, which did not permit the guest to tuck the lady of the house under the arm, as a rustic does his sweetheart at a wake, she was ushered to the eating-room.

Here they were joined by Bucklaw, Craigengelt, and other neighbors whom the Lord Keeper had previously invited to meet the Marquis of A——. An apology, founded upon a slight indisposition, was alleged as an excuse for the absence of Miss Ashton, whose seat appeared unoccupied. The entertainment was splendid to profusion, and was protracted till a late hour.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SECOND.

Such was our fallen father's fate,
Yet better than mine own ;
He shared his exile with his mate,
I'm banish'd forth alone.

WALLER.

I WILL not attempt to describe the mixture of indignation and regret with which Ravenswood left the seat which had belonged to his ancestors. The terms in which Lady Ashton's billet was couched rendered it impossible for him, without being deficient in that spirit of which he perhaps had too much, to remain an instant longer within its walls. The Marquis, who had his share in the affront, was, nevertheless, still willing to make some efforts at conciliation. He therefore suffered his kinsman to depart alone, making him promise, however, that he would wait for him at the small inn called the Tod's Hole, situated, as our readers may be pleased to recollect, half-way betwixt Ravenswood Castle and Wolf's Crag, and about five Scottish miles distant from each. Here the Marquis proposed to join the Master of Ravenswood, either that night or the next morning. His own feelings would have induced him to have left the castle directly, but he was loath to forfeit, without at least one effort, the advantages which he had proposed from his visit to the Lord Keeper ; and the Master of Ravenswood was, even in the very heat of his resentment, unwilling to foreclose any chance of reconciliation which might arise out of the partiality which Sir William Ashton had shown toward him, as well as the intercessory arguments of his noble kinsman. He himself departed without a moment's delay, further than was necessary to make this arrangement.

At first he spurred his horse at a quick pace through an avenue of the park, as if, by rapidity of motion, he could stupefy the confusion of feelings with which he was assailed. But as the road grew wilder and more sequestered, and when the trees had hidden the turrets of the castle, he gradually slackened his pace, as if to indulge the painful reflections which he had in vain endeavored to repress. The path in which he found himself led him to the Mermaiden's Fountain, and to the cottage of Alice, and the fatal influence which superstitious belief attached to the former spot, as well as the admonitions which had been in vain offered to him by the inhabitant of the latter, forced themselves upon his memory. "Old saws speak truth,"

he said to himself ; “ and the Mermaiden’s Well has indeed witnessed the last act of rashness of the heir of Ravenswood.—Alice spoke well,” he continued, “ and I am in the situation which she foretold—or rather, I am more deeply dishonored—not the dependent and ally of the destroyer of my father’s house, as the old sibyl presaged, but the degraded wretch, who has aspired to hold that subordinate character, and has been rejected with disdain.”

We are bound to tell the tale as we have received it , and considering the distance of the time, and propensity of those through whose mouths it has passed to the marvelous, this could not be called a Scottish story, unless it manifested a tinge of Scottish superstition. As Ravenswood approached the solitary fountain, he is said to have met with the following singular adventure :—His horse, which was moving slowly forward, suddenly interrupted its steady and composed pace, snorted, reared, and, though urged by the spur, refused to proceed, as if some object of terror had suddenly presented itself. On looking to the fountain, Ravenswood discerned a female figure, dressed in a white, or rather grayish mantle, placed on the very spot on which Lucy Ashton had reclined while listening to the fatal tale of love. His immediate impression was, that she had conjectured by which path he would traverse the park on his departure, and placed herself at this well-known and sequestered place of rendezvous, to indulge her own sorrow and his in a parting interview. In this belief he jumped from his horse, and making its bridle fast to a tree, walked hastily toward the fountain, pronouncing eagerly, yet under his breath, the words, “ Miss Ashton !—Lucy ! ”

The figure turned as he addressed it, and discovered to his wondering eyes the features, not of Lucy Ashton, but of old blind Alice. The singularity of her dress, which rather resembled a shroud than the garment of a living woman—the appearance of her person larger, as it struck him, than it usually seemed to be—above all, the strange circumstances of a blind, infirm, and decrepit person being found alone and at a distance from her habitation (considerable, if her infirmities be taken into account), combined to impress him with a feeling of wonder approaching to fear. As he approached she arose slowly from her seat, held her shriveled hand up as if to prevent his coming more near, and her withered lips moved fast, although no sound issued from them. Ravenswood stopped ; and as, after a moment’s pause, he again advanced toward her, Alice, or her apparition, moved, or glided, backward toward the thicket, still keeping her face turned toward

him. The trees soon hid the form from his sight; and yielding to the strong and terrific impression that the being which he had seen was not of this world, the Master of Ravenswood remained rooted to the ground whereon he stood when he caught his last view of her. At length, summoning up his courage, he advanced to the spot on which the figure had seemed to be seated; but neither was there pressure of the grass nor any other circumstance to induce him to believe that what he had seen was real and substantial.

Full of those strange thoughts and confused apprehensions which awake in the bosom of one who conceives he has witnessed some preternatural appearance, the Master of Ravenswood walked back toward his horse, frequently, however, looking behind him, not without apprehension, as if expecting that the vision would re-appear. But the apparition, whether it was real, or whether it was the creation of a heated and agitated imagination, returned not again; and he found his horse sweating and terrified, as if experiencing that agony of fear with which the presence of a supernatural being is supposed to agitate the brute creation. The Master mounted, and rode slowly forward, soothing his steed from time to time, while the animal seemed internally to shrink and shudder, as if expecting some new object of fear at the opening of every glade. The rider, after a moment's consideration, resolved to investigate the matter further. "Can my eyes have deceived me," he said, "and deceived me for such a space of time?—Or are this woman's infirmities but feigned, in order to excite compassion?—And even then, her motion resembled not that of a living and existing person. Must I adopt the popular creed, and think that the unhappy being has formed a league with the powers of darkness?—I am determined to be resolved—I will not brook imposition even from my own eyes."

In this uncertainty he rode up to the little wicket of Alice's garden. Her seat beneath the birch-tree was vacant, though the day was pleasant, and the sun was high. He approached the hut, and heard from within the sobs and wailing of a female. No answer was returned when he knocked, so that, after a moment's pause, he lifted the latch and entered. It was indeed a house of solitude and sorrow. Stretched upon her miserable pallet lay the corpse of the last retainer of the house of Ravenswood, who still abode on their paternal domains! Life had but shortly departed; and the little girl by whom she had been attended in her last moments was wringing her hands and sobbing, betwixt childish fear and sorrow, over the body of her mistress.

The Master of Ravenswood had some difficulty to compose the terrors of the poor child, whom his unexpected appearance had at first rather appalled than comforted; and when he succeeded, the first expression which the girl used intimated that "he had come too late." Upon inquiring the meaning of this expression, he learned that the deceased, upon the first attack of the mortal agony, had sent a peasant to the castle to beseech an interview of the Master of Ravenswood, and had expressed the utmost impatience for his return. But the messengers of the poor are tardy and negligent: the fellow had not reached the castle, as was afterward learned, until Ravenswood had left it, and had then found too much amusement among the retinue of the strangers to return in any haste to the cottage of Alice. Meantime her anxiety of mind seemed to increase with the agony of her body; and, to use the phrase of Babie, her only attendant, "she prayed powerfully that she might see her master's son once more, and renew her warning." She died just as the clock in the distant village tolled one; and Ravenswood remembered, with internal shudderings, that he had heard the chime sound through the wood just before he had seen what he was now much disposed to consider as the spectre of the deceased.

It was necessary, as well from his respect to the departed, as in common humanity to her terrified attendant, that he should take some measures to relieve the girl from her distressing situation. The deceased, he understood, had expressed a desire to be buried in a solitary churchyard, near the little inn of the Tod's Hole, called the Hermitage, or more commonly Armitage, in which lay interred some of the Ravenswood family, and many of their followers. Ravenswood conceived it his duty to gratify this predilection, so commonly found to exist among the Scottish peasantry, and despatched Babie to the neighboring village to procure the assistance of some females, assuring her that, in the meanwhile, he would himself remain with the dead body, which, as in Thessaly of old, it is accounted highly unfit to leave without a watch.

Thus, in the course of a quarter of an hour or little more, he found himself sitting a solitary guard over the inanimate corpse of her whose dismissed spirit, unless his eyes had strangely deceived him, had so recently manifested itself before him. Notwithstanding his natural courage, the Master was considerably affected by a concurrence of circumstances so extraordinary. "She died expressing her eager desire to see me. Can it be then"—was his natural course of reflection—"can strong and earnest wishes, formed during the last agony of

nature, survive its catastrophe, surmount the awful bounds of the spiritual world, and place before us its inhabitants in the hues and coloring of life?—And why was that manifested to the eye which could not unfold its tale to the ear?—and wherefore should a breach be made in the laws of nature, yet its purpose remain unknown? Vain questions, which only death, when it shall make me like the pale and withered form before me, can ever resolve.”

He laid a cloth, as he spoke, over the lifeless face, upon whose features he felt unwilling any longer to dwell. He then took his place in an old carved oaken chair, ornamented with his own armorial bearings, which Alice had contrived to appropriate to her own use in the pillage which took place among creditors, officers, domestics, and messengers of the law, when his father left Ravenswood Castle for the last time. Thus seated, he banished, as much as he could, the superstitious feelings which the late incident naturally inspired. His own were sad enough, without the exaggeration of supernatural terror, since he found himself transferred from the situation of a successful lover of Lucy Ashton, and an honored and respected friend of her father, into the melancholy and solitary guardian of the abandoned and forsaken corpse of a common pauper.

He was relieved, however, from his sad office sooner than he could reasonably have expected, considering the distance betwixt the hut of the deceased and the village, and the age and infirmities of three old women, who came from thence, in military phrase, to relieve guard upon the body of the defunct. On any other occasion the speed of these reverend sibyls would have been much more moderate, for the first was eighty years of age and upward, the second was paralytic, and the third lame of a leg from some accident. But the burial duties rendered to the deceased, are, to the Scottish peasant of either sex, a labor of love. I know not whether it is from the temper of the people, grave and enthusiastic as it certainly is, or from the recollection of the ancient Catholic opinions, when the funeral rites were always considered as a period of festival to the living, but feasting, good cheer, and even inebriety, were, and are, the frequent accompaniments of a Scottish old-fashioned burial. What the funeral feast or *dirgie*, as it is called, was to the men, the gloomy preparations of the dead body for the coffin were to the women. To straighten the contorted limbs upon a board used for that melancholy purpose, to array the corpse in clean linen, and over that in its woollen shroud, were operations committed always to the old matrons of the village, and in which they found a singular and gloomy delight.

The old women paid the Master their salutations with a ghastly smile, which reminded him of the meeting betwixt Macbeth and the witches on the blasted heath of Forres. He gave them some money, and recommended to them the charge of the dead body of their contemporary, an office which they willingly undertook; intimating to him, at the same time, that he must leave the hut, in order that they might begin their mournful duties. Ravenswood readily agreed to depart, only tarrying to recommend to them due attention to the body, and to receive information where he was to find the sexton, or beadle, who had in charge the deserted churchyard of the Armitage, in order to prepare matters for the reception of old Alice in the place of repose which she had selected for herself.

"Ye'll no be pinched to find out Johnie Mortsheugh," said the elder sibyl, and still her withered cheek wore a grisly smile,—"he dwells near the Tod's Hole, a house of entertainment where there has been mony a blithe birling—for death and drink-draining are near neighbors to ane anither."

"Ay! and that's e'en true, cummer," said the lame hag, propping herself with a crutch which supported the shortness of her left leg, "for I mind when the father of this Master of Ravenswood that is now standing before us, sticked young Blackhall with his whinger, for a wrang word said over their wine, or brandy, or what not—he gaed in as light as a lark, and he came out wi' his feet foremost. I was at the winding of the corpse; and when the bluid was washed off, he was a bonny bouk of a man's body."

It may easily be believed, that this ill-timed anecdote hastened the Master's purpose of quitting a company so evil-omened and so odious. Yet, while walking to the tree to which his horse was tied, and busying himself with adjusting the girths of the saddle, he could not avoid hearing, through the hedge of the little garden, a conversation respecting himself, betwixt the lame woman and the octogenarian sibyl. The pair had hobbled into the garden to gather rosemary, southernwood, rue, and other plants proper to be strewed upon the body, and burned by way of fumigation in the chimney of the cottage. The paralytic wretch, almost exhausted by the journey, was left guard upon the corpse, lest witches or fiends might play their sport with it.

The following low croaking dialogue was necessarily overheard by the Master of Ravenswood:—

"That's a fresh and full-grown hemlock, Annie Winnie—mony a cummer lang syne wad hae sought nae better horse to

flee over hill and how, through mist and moonlight, and light down in the King of France's cellar."

"Ay, cummer! but the very deil has turned as hard-hearted now as the Lord Keeper, and the grit folk that hae breasts like whin-stane. They prick us and they pine us, and they pi' us on the pinny-winkles for witches; and, if I say my prayers backward ten times ower, Satan will never gie me amends o' them."

"Did ye ever see the foul thief?" asked her neighbor.

"Na!" replied the other spokeswoman; "but I trow I hae dreamed of him mony a time, and I think the day will come they will burn me for't.—But ne'er mind, cummer! we hae this dollar of the Master's, and we'll send down for bread and for yill, tobacco, and a drap brandy to burn, and a wee pickle saft sugar—and be there deil, or nae deil, lass, we'll hae a merry night o't."

Here her leathern chops uttered a sort of cackling ghastly laugh, resembling, to a certain degree, the cry of the screech-owl.

"He's a frank man, and a free-handed man, the Master," said Annie Winnie, "and a comely personage—broad in the shouthers, and narrow around the lungies—he wad mak a bonny corpse—I wad like to hae the streaking and winding o' him."

"It is written on his brow, Annie Winnie," returned the octogenarian, her companion, "that hand of woman, or of man either, will never straught him—dead-deal will never be laid on his back—make you your market of that, for I hae it frae a sure hand."

"Will it be his lot to die on the battle-ground then, Ailsie Gourlay?—Will he die by the sword, or the ball, as his forbears hae dune before him, mony ane o' them?"

"Ask nae mair questions about it—he'll no be graced sae far," replied the sage.

"I ken ye are wiser than ither folk, Ailsie Gourlay—But wha tell'd ye this?"

"Fashna your thumb about that, Annie Winnie," answered the sibyl—"I hae it frae a hand sure enough."

"But ye said ye never saw the foul thief," reiterated her inquisitive companion.

"I hae it frae as sure a hand," said Ailsie, "and frae them that spaed his fortune before the sark gaed ower his head."

"Hark! I hear his horse's feet riding aff," said the other; "they dinna sound as if good luck was wi' them."

"Mak haste, sirs," cried the paralytic hag from the cottage,

"and let us do what is needfu,' and say what is *fitting*, for if the dead corpse binna straughted it will girn and thraw, and that will fear the best o' us."

Ravenswood was now out of hearing. He despised most of the ordinary prejudices about witchcraft, omens, and vaticination, to which his age and country still gave such implicit credit, that to express a doubt of them, was accounted a crime equal to the unbelief of Jews or Saracens; he knew also that the prevailing belief concerning witches, operating upon the hypochondriac habits of those whom age, infirmity, and poverty rendered liable to suspicion, and enforced by the fear of death, and the pangs of the most cruel tortures, often extorted those confessions which encumber and disgrace the criminal records of Scotland during the seventeenth century. But the vision of that morning, whether real or imaginary, had impressed his mind with a superstitious feeling which he in vain endeavored to shake off. The nature of the business which awaited him at the little inn, called Tod's Hole, where he soon after arrived, was not of a kind to restore his spirits.

It was necessary he should see Mortsheugh, the sexton of the old burial-ground at Armitage, to arrange matters for the funeral of Alice; and as the man dwelt near the place of her late residence, the Master, after a slight refreshment, walked toward the place where the body of Alice was to be deposited. It was situated in the nook formed by the eddying sweep of a stream which issued from the adjoining hills. A rude cavern in an adjacent rock, which, in the interior, was cut into the shape of a cross, formed the hermitage, where some Saxon saint had in ancient time done penance, and given name to the place. The rich abbey of Coldinghame had, in latter days, established a chapel in the neighborhood, of which no vestige was now visible, though the churchyard which surrounded it was still, as upon the present occasion, used for the interment of particular persons. One or two shattered yew-trees still grew within the precincts of that which had once been holy ground. Warriors and barons had been buried there of old, but their names were forgotten, and their monuments demolished. The only sepulchral memorials which remained, were the upright headstones which marked the graves of persons of inferior rank. The abode of the sexton was a solitary cottage adjacent to the ruined wall of the cemetery, but so low, that, with its thatch, which nearly reached the ground, covered with a thick crop of grass, fog, and house-leeks, it resembled an overgrown grave. On inquiry, however, Ravenswood found that the man of the last mattock was **absent at a bridal, being**

fiddler as well as grave-digger to the vicinity. He therefore retired to the little inn, leaving a message that early next morning he would again call for the person whose double occupation connected him at once with the house of mourning and the house of feasting.

An outrider of the Marquis arrived at Tod's Hole shortly after, with a message, intimating that his master would join Ravenswood at that place on the following morning; and the Master, who would otherwise have proceeded to his old retreat at Wolf's Crag, remained there accordingly, to give meeting to his noble kinsman.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THIRD.

HAMLET.—Has this fellow no feeling of his business?—he sings at grave making.

HORATIO.—Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

HAMLET.—'Tis e'en so; the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

HAMLET, Act V Scene I.

THE sleep of Ravenswood was broken by ghastly and agitating visions, and his waking intervals disturbed by melancholy reflections on the past, and painful anticipations of the future. He was perhaps the only traveler who ever slept in that miserable kennel without complaining of his lodgings, or feeling inconvenience from their deficiencies. It is when "the mind is free the body's delicate." Morning, however, found the Master an early riser, in hopes that the fresh air of the dawn might afford the refreshment which night had refused him. He took his way toward the solitary burial-ground, which lay about half-a-mile from the inn.

The thin blue smoke, which already began to curl upward, and to distinguish the cottage of the living from the habitation of the dead, apprised him that its inmate had returned and was stirring. Accordingly, on entering the little churchyard, he saw the old man laboring in a half-made grave. My destiny, thought Ravenswood, seems to lead me to scenes of fate and of death; but these are childish thoughts, and they shall not master me. I will not again suffer my imagination to beguile my senses.—The old man rested on his spade as the Master approached him, as if to receive his commands; and as he did

not immediately speak, the sexton opened the discourse in his own way.

"Ye will be a wedding customer, sir, I'se warrant,"

"What makes you think so, friend?" replied the Master.

"I live by twa trades, sir," replied the blithe old man; "fiddle, sir, and spade; filling the world, and emptying of it; and I suld ken baith cast of customers by head-mark in thirty years' practice."

"You are mistaken, however, this morning," replied Ravenswood.

"Am I?" said the old man, looking keenly at him, "troth and it may be; since, for as brent as your brow is, there is something sitting upon it this day, that is as near akin to death as to wedlock. Weel, weel the pick and shovel are as ready to your order as bow and fiddle."

"I wish you," said Ravenswood, "to look after the decent interment of an old woman, Alice Gray, who lived at the Craig-foot in Ravenswood Park."

"Alice Gray. blind Alice!" said the sexton; "and is she gane at last? that's another jow of the bell to bid me be ready. I mind when Habbie Gray brought her down to this land; a likely lass she was then, and looked over her southland nose at us a'. I trow her pride got a downcome. And is she e'en gane?"

"She died yesterday," said Ravenswood; "and desired to be buried here, beside her husband; you know where he lies, no doubt?"

"Ken where he lies?" answered the sexton, with national indirection of response, "I ken where a'body lies, that lies here. But ye were speaking o' her grave?—Lord help us—it's no an ordinar grave that will haud her in, if a's true that folk said of Alice in her auld days; and if I gae to six feet deep,—and a warlock's grave shouldna be an inch mair ebb, or her ain witch summers would soon whirl her out of her shroud for a' their auld acquaintance—and be't six feet, or be't three, wha's to pay the making o't, I pray ye?"

"I will pay that, my friend, and all reasonable charges."

"Reasonable charges?" said the sexton; "ou, there's grund-mail—and bell-siller—(though the bell's broken, nae doubt)—and the kist—and my day's wark—and my bit fee—and some brandy and yill to the dirgie—I an: no thinking that you can inter her, to ca' decently, under sixteen pound Scots."

"There is the money, my friend," said Ravenswood, "and something over. Be sure you know the grave."

"Ye'll be ane o' her English relations, I'se warrant," said the

hoary man of skulls · “I hae heard she married far below her station; it was very right to let her bite on the bridle when she was living, and it’s very right to gie her a decent burial now she’s dead, ‘or that’s a matter o’ credit to yoursell rather than to her. Folk may let their kindred shift for themsells when they are alive, and can bear the burden of their ain misdoings; but it’s an unnatural thing to let them be buried like dogs, when a the discredit gangs to the kindred—what kens the dead corpse about it?”

“You would not have people neglect the relations on a bridal occasion neither?” said Ravenswood, who was amused with the professional limitation of the gravedigger’s philanthropy.

The old man cast up his sharp gray eyes with a shrewd smile, as if he understood the jest, but instantly continued, with his former gravity,—“Bridals—wha wad neglect bridals, that had ony regard for plenishing the earth? To be sure, they suld be celebrated with all manner of good cheer, and meeting of friends, and musical instruments, harp, sackbut, and psaltery; or gude fiddle and pipes, when these auld-warld instruments of melody are hard to be compassed.”

“The presence of the fiddle, I daresay,” replied Ravenswood, “would atone for the absence of all others.”

The sexton again looked sharply up at him, as he answered “Nae doubt—nae doubt—if it were weel played—but yonder,” he said, as if to change the discourse, “is Halbert Gray’s lang hame, that ye were speering after, just the third ourock beyond the muckle through-stane that stands on sax legs yonder abune some ane of the Ravenswoods; for there is mony of their kin and followers here, deil lift them! though it isna just their main burial-place.”

“They are no favorites, then, of yours, these Ravenswoods?” said the Master, not much pleased with the passing benediction which was thus bestowed on his family and name.

“I kenna wha should favor them,” said the gravedigger; “when they had lands and power, they were ill guides of them baith, and now their head’s down, there’s few care how lang they may be of lifting it again.”

“Indeed!” said Ravenswood; “I never heard that this unhappy family deserved ill-will at the hands of their country. I grant their poverty—if that renders them contemptible.”

It will gang a far away till’t,” said the sexton of Hermitage, ye may tak my word for that—at least, I ken naething else that suld mak myself contemptible, and folk are far frae respecting me as they wad do if I lived in a twa-lofted-sclated house. But

as for the Ravenswoods, I hae seen three generations of them, deil ane to mend other."

"I thought they had enjoyed a fair character in the country," said their descendant.

"Character! Ou, ye see, sir," said the sexton, "as for the auld gude-sire body of a lord, I lived on his land when I was a swanking young chield, and could hae blawn the trumpet wi' onybody, for I had wind enough then—and touching this trumpeter Marine* that I have heard play afore the Lords of the Circuit, I wad hae made nae mair o' him than of a bairn and a bawbee whistle—I defy him to hae played 'Boot and saddle,' or 'Horse and away,' or 'Gallants, come trot,' with me—he hadna the tones."

"But what is all this to old Lord Ravenswood, my friend?" said the Master, who, with an anxiety not unnatural in his circumstances, was desirous of prosecuting the musician's first topic—"What had his memory to do with the degeneracy of the trumpet music?"

"Just this, sir," answered the sexton, "that I lost my wind in his service. Ye see I was trumpeter at the castle, and had allowance for blawing at break of day, and at dinner-time, and ther whiles when there was company about, and it pleased my lord; and when he raised his militia to caper awa to Bothwell Brigg against the wrang-headed wastland Whigs, I behoved, reason or nane, to munt a horse and caper awa wi' them."

"And very reasonable," said Ravenswood; "you were his servant and vassal."

"Servitor, say ye?" replied the sexton, "and so I was—but it was to blaw folk to their warm dinner, or at the warst to a decent kirkyard, and no to skirl them awa to a bluidy brae-side, where there was deil a bedral but the hooded craw. But bide ye—ye shall hear what cam o't, and how far I am bund to be bedesman to the Ravenswoods.—Till't, ye see, we gaed on a braw simmer morning, twenty-fourth of June, saxteen hundred and se'enty-nine, of a' the days of the month and year,—drums beat—guns rattled—horses kicked and trampled. Hackstoun of Rathillet keepit the brigg wi' musket and carabine and pike, sword and scythe for what I ken, and we horsemen were ordered down to cross at the ford,—I hate fords at a' times, let abee when there's thousands of armed men on the other side. There was auld Ravenswood brandishing his Andrew Ferrara at the head, and crying to us to come and bucke of, as if we had been gaun to a fair,—there was Caleb Balderston, that is living yet, flourishing in the rear, and swearing Gog and Magog, he would

* [Note J. Trumpeter Marine at Sheriffmuir.]

put steel through the guts of ony man that turned bridle,—there was young Allan Ravenswood, that was then Master, wi' a bended pistol in his hand,—it was a mercy it gaed na aff,—crying to me, that had scarce as much wind left as serve the necessary purpose of my ain lungs, 'Sound, you poltroon! sound, you damned cowardly villain, or I will blow your brains out!' and, to be sure, I blew sic points of war, that the scraugh of a clockin-hen was music to them."

"Well, sir, cut all this short," said Ravenswood.

"Short!—I had like to hae been cut short mysell, in the flower of my youth, as Scripture says; and that's the very thing that I compleen o'—Weel! in to the water we behoved a' to splash, heels ower head, sit or fa'—ae horse driving on anither, as is the way of brute beasts, and riders that hae as little sense,—the very bushes on the ither side were ableeze wi' the flashes of the Whig guns; and my horse had just taen the grund, when a blackavised westland carle—I wad mind the face o' him a hundred years yet—an e'e like a wild falcon's, and a beard as broad as my shovel, clapped the end o' his lang black gun within a quarter's length o' my lug!—by the grace o' Mercy, the horse swarved round, and I fell aff at the tae side as the ball whistled by at the tither, and the fell auld lord took the Whig such a swauk wi' his broadsword that he made two pieces o' his head, and down fell the lurdane wi' a' his bowk abune me."

"You were rather obliged to the old lord, I think," said Ravenswood.

"Was I? my sartie! first for bringing me into jeopardy, would I nould I—and then for whomling a chield on the tap o' me, that dang the very wind out o' my body?—I hae been short-breathed ever since, and canna gang twenty yards without peghing like a miller's aiver."*

"You lost, then, your place as trumpeter?" said Ravenswood.

"Lost it? to be sure I lost it," replied the sexton, "for I couldna hae played pew upon a dry humlock;—but I might hae done weel enough, for I keepit the wage and the free house, and little to do but play on the fiddle to them, but for Allan, last Lord Ravenswood, that was far waur than ever his father was."

"What," said the Master, "did my father—I mean, did his father's son—this last Lord Ravenswood, deprive you of what the bounty of his father allowed you?"

"Ay, troth did he," answered the old man; "for he loot his

* [A broken-winded cart-horse.]

affairs gang to the dogs, and let this at Sir William Ashton on us, that will gie naething for naething, and just removed me and a' the puir creatures that had bite and soup in the castle, and a hole to put our heads in, when things were in the auld way."

"If Lord Ravenswood protected his people, my friend, while he had the means of doing so, I think they might spare his memory," replied the Master.

"Ye are welcome to your ain opinion, sir," said the sexton; "but ye winna persuade me that he did his duty, either to himsell or to huz puir dependent creatures, in guiding us the gate he has done—he might hae gien us liferent tacks of our bits o' houses and yards—and me that's an auld man living in yon miserable cabin, that's fitter for the dead than the quick, and killed wi' rheumatise, and John Smith in my dainty bit mailing, and his window glazen, and a' because Ravenswood guided his gear like a fule!"

"It is but too true," said Ravenswood, conscience-struck; "the penalties of extravagance extend far beyond the prodigal's own sufferings."

"However," said the sexton, "this young man Edgar is like to avenge my wrangs on the haill of his kindred."

"Indeed?" said Ravenswood; "why do you suppose so?"

"They say he is about to marry the daughter of Liddy Ashton; and let her leddyship get his head ance under her oxter, and see you if she winna gie his neck a thraw. Sorra a bit if I were him—Let her alane for hauding a' thing in het water that draws near her—sae the warst wish I shall wish the lad is, that he may take his ain creditable gate o't and ally himsell wi' his father's enemies, that have taken his broad lands and my bonny kailyard from the lawful owners thereof."

Cervantes acutely remarks, that flattery is pleasing even from the mouth of a madman; and censure, as well as praise, often affect us, while we despise the opinions and motives on which it is founded and expressed. Ravenswood, abruptly reiterating his command that Alice's funeral should be attended to, flung away from the sexton, under the painful impression that the great, as well as the small vulgar, would think of his engagement with Lucy like this ignorant and selfish peasant.

"And I have stooped to subject myself to these calumnies, and am rejected notwithstanding! Lucy, your faith must be true and perfect as a diamond, to compensate for the dishonor which men's opinions, and the conduct of your mother, attach to the heir of Ravenswood!"

As he raised his eyes, he beheld the Marquis of A——, who,

having arrived at the Tod's Hole, had walked forth to look for his kinsman.

After mutual greetings, he made some apology to the Master for not coming forward on the preceding evening. "It was his wish," he said, "to have done so, but he had come to the knowledge of some matters which induced him to delay his purpose. I find," he proceeded, "there has been a love affair here, kinsman; and though I might blame you for not having communicated with me, as being in some degree the chief of your family"—

"With your lordship's permission," said Ravenswood. "I am deeply grateful for the interest you are pleased to take in me—but I am the chief and head of my family."

"I know it—I know it," said the Marquis; "in a strict heraldic and genealogical sense, you certainly are so—what I mean is, that being in some measure under my guardianship"—

"I must take the liberty to say, my lord," answered Ravenswood—and the tone in which he interrupted the Marquis boded no longer duration to the friendship of the noble relatives, when he himself was interrupted by the little sexton, who came puffing after them, to ask if their honors would choose music at the change-house to make up for short cheer.

"We want no music," said the Master abruptly.

"Your honor disna ken what ye're refusing, then," said the fiddler, with the impertinent freedom of his profession. "I can play 'Wilt thou do't again,' and 'The Auld Man's Mear's Dead,' sax times better than ever Pattie Birnie.* I'll get my fiddle in the turning of a coffin screw."

"Take yourself away, sir," said the Marquis.

"And if your honor be a north-country gentleman," said the persevering minstrel, "whilk I wad judge from your tongue, I can play 'Liggeram Cosh,' and 'Mullin Dhu,' and 'The Cummers of Athole.'"

"Take yourself away, friend; you interrupt our conversation."

"Or if, under your honor's favor, ye should happen to be a thought honest, I can play" (this in a low and confidential tone) "'Killiecrankie,' and 'The King shall hae his ain,' and 'The Auld Stuarts back again,'—and the wife at the change-house is a decent discreet body, neither kens nor cares what toasts are drucken, and what tunes are played in her house—she's deaf to a' thing but the clink o' the siller."

* [Pattie Birnie, a celebrated fiddler and songster of Kinghorn.—See Allan Ramsay's *Collected Poems*, Edition 1721.]

The Marquis, who was sometimes suspected of Jacobitism, could not help laughing as he threw the fellow a dollar, and bid him go play to the servants if he had a mind, and leave them at peace."

"Aweel, gentlemen," said he, "I am wishing your honors gude-day—I'll be a' the better of the dollar, and ye'll be the waur of wanting the music, I'se tell ye. But I'se gang hame, and finish the tuning o' a fiddle-string, lay by my spade, and then get my tother bread-winner, and awa to your folk, and see if they hae better lugs than their masters."

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOURTH.

True love, an thou be true,
Thou hast ane kittle part to play;
For fortune, fashion, fancy, and thou,
Maun strive for many a day.

I've kend by mony a friend's tale,
Far better by this heart of mine,
What time and change of fancy avail
A true-love knot to untwine.

HENDERSOUN.

"I WISHED to tell you, my good kinsman," said the Marquis, "now that we are quit of that impertinent fiddler, that I had tried to discuss this love affair of yours with Sir William Ashton's daughter. I never saw the young lady but for a few minutes to-day; so, being a stranger to her personal merits, I pay a compliment to you, and offer her no offence, in saying you might do better."

"My lord, I am much indebted for the interest you have taken in my affairs," said Ravenswood. "I did not intend to have troubled you in any matter concerning Miss Ashton. As my engagement with that young lady has reached your lordship, I can only say, that you must necessarily suppose that I was aware of the objections to my marrying into her father's family, and of course must have been completely satisfied with the reasons by which these objections are overbalanced, since I have proceeded so far in the matter."

"Nay, Master, if you had heard me out," said his noble relation, "you might have spared that observation; for without questioning that you had reasons which seemed to you to counterbalance every other obstacle, I set myself, by every

means that it became me to use toward the Ashtons, to persuade them to meet your views."

"I am obliged to your lordship for your unsolicited intercession," said Ravenswood; "especially as I am sure your lordship would never carry it beyond the bounds which it became me to use."

"Of that," said the Marquis, "you may be confident; I myself felt the delicacy of the matter too much to place a gentleman nearly connected with my house in a degrading or dubious situation with these Ashtons. But I pointed out all the advantages of their marrying their daughter into a house so honorable, and so nearly related with the first in Scotland; I explained the exact degree of relationship in which the Ravenswoods stand to ourselves; and I even hinted how political matters were like to turn, and what cards would be trumps next Parliament. I said I regarded you as a son—or a nephew, or so—rather than as a more distant relation; and that I made your affair entirely my own."

"And what was the issue of your lordship's explanation?" said Ravenswood, in some doubt whether he should resent or express gratitude for his interference.

"Why, the Lord Keeper would have listened to reason," said the Marquis; "he is rather unwilling to leave his place, which, in the present view of a change, must be vacated; and to say truth, he seemed to have a liking for you, and to be sensible of the general advantages to be attained by such a match. But his lady, who is tongue of the trumpet, Master"—

"What of Lady Ashton, my lord?" said Ravenswood; "let me know the issue of this extraordinary conference—I can bear it."

"I am glad of that, kinsman," said the Marquis, "for I am ashamed to tell you half what she said. It is enough—her mind is made up—and the mistress of a first-rate boarding-school could not have rejected with more haughty indifference the suit of a half-pay Irish officer, beseeching permission to wait upon the heiress of a West India planter, than Lady Ashton spurned every proposal of mediation which it could at all become me to offer in behalf of you, my good kinsman. I cannot guess what she means. A more honorable connection she could not form, that's certain. As for money and land, that used to be her husband's business rather than hers; I really think she hates you for having the rank which her husband has not, and perhaps for not having the lands that her good man has. But I should only vex you to say more about it—here we are at the change-house."

The Master of Ravenswood paused as he entered the cottage, which reeked through all its crevices, and they were not few, from the exertions of the Marquis's traveling-cooks to supply good cheer, and spread, as it were, a table in the wilderness.

"My Lord Marquis," said Ravenswood, "I already mentioned that accident has put your lordship in possession of a secret which, with my consent, should have remained one even to you, my kinsman, for some time. Since the secret was to part from my own custody, and that of the only person besides who was interested in it, I am not sorry it should have reached your lordship's ears, as being fully aware that you are my noble kinsman and friend."

"You may believe it is safely lodged with me, Master of Ravenswood," said the Marquis; "but I should like well to hear you say, that you renounced the idea of an alliance which you can hardly pursue without a certain degree of degradation."

"Of that, my lord, I shall judge," answered Ravenswood, "and, I hope, with delicacy as sensitive as any of my friends. But I have no engagement with Sir William and Lady Ashton. It is with Miss Ashton alone that I have entered upon the subject, and my conduct in the matter shall be entirely ruled by hers. If she continues to prefer me in my poverty to the wealthier suitors whom her friends recommend, I may well make some sacrifice to her sincere affection—I may well surrender to her the less tangible and less palpable advantages of birth, and the deep-rooted prejudices of family hatred. If Miss Lucy Ashton should change her mind on a subject of such delicacy, I trust my friends will be silent on my disappointment, and I shall know how to make my enemies so."

"Spoke like a gallant young nobleman," said the Marquis; "for my part, I have that regard for you that I should be sorry the thing went on. This Sir William Ashton was a pretty enough pettifogging kind of a lawyer twenty years ago, and betwixt battling at the bar and leading in committees of Parliament, he has got well on—the Darien matter lent him a lift, for he had good intelligence and sound views, and sold out in time—but the best work is had out of him. No government will take him at his own, or rather his wife's, extravagant valuation; and betwixt his indecision and her insolence, from all I can guess, he will outsit his market and be had cheap when no one will bid for him. I say nothing of Miss Ashton; but I assure you a connection with her father will be neither useful nor ornamental, beyond that part of your father's spoils

which **he** may be prevailed upon to disgorge by way of tocher-good—and take my word for it, you will get more if you have spirit to bell the cat with him in the House of Peers.—And I will be the man, cousin,” continued his lordship, “will course the fox for you, and make him rue the day that ever he refused a composition too honorable for him, and proposed by me on the behalf of a kinsman.”

There was something in all this, that, as it were, overshoot the mark. Ravenswood could not disguise from himself that his noble kinsman had more reasons for taking offence at the reception of his suit, than regarded his interest and honor, yet he could neither complain nor be surprised that it should be so. He contented himself therefore with repeating, that his attachment was to Miss Ashton personally; that he desired neither wealth nor aggrandizement from her father's means and influence; and that nothing should prevent his keeping his engagement, excepting her own express desire that it should be relinquished—and he requested as a favor that the matter might be no more mentioned betwixt them at present, assuring the Marquis of A—— that he should be his confidant in its progress or its interruption.

The Marquis soon had more agreeable, as well as more interesting subjects on which to converse. A foot-post, who had followed him from Edinburgh to Ravenswood Castle, and had traced his steps to the Tod's Hole, brought him a packet laden with good news. The political calculations of the Marquis had proved just, both in London and at Edinburgh, and he saw almost within his grasp the pre-eminence for which he had panted.—The refreshments which the servants had prepared were now put on the table, and an epicure would perhaps have enjoyed them with additional zest, from the contrast which such fare afforded to the miserable cabin in which it was served up.

The turn of conversation corresponded with and added to the social feelings of the company. The Marquis expanded with pleasure on the power which probable incidents were likely to assign to him, and on the use which he hoped to make of it in serving his kinsman Ravenswood. Ravenswood could but repeat the gratitude which he really felt, even when he considered the topic as too long dwelt upon. The wine was excellent, notwithstanding its having been brought in a runlet from Edinburgh; and the habits of the Marquis, when engaged with such good cheer, were somewhat sedentary. And so it fell out that they delayed their journey **two hours** later than **was** their original purpose.

"But what of that, my good young friend?" said the Marquis; "your Castle of Wolf's Crag is but five or six miles' distance, and will afford the same hospitality to your kinsman of A—— that it gave to this same Sir William Ashton."

"Sir William took the castle by storm," said Ravenswood, "and, like many a victor, had little reason to congratulate himself on his conquest."

"Well, well!" said Lord A——, whose dignity was something relaxed by the wine he had drunk,—“I see I must bribe you to harbor me—Come, pledge me in a bumper health to the last young lady that slept at Wolf's Crag, and liked her quarters.—My bones are not so tender as hers, and I am resolved to occupy her apartment to-night, that I may judge how hard the couch is that love can soften."

"Your lordship may choose what penance you please," said Ravenswood; "but I assure you, I should expect my old servant to hang himself, or throw himself from the battlements, should your lordship visit him so unexpectedly—I do assure you, we are totally and literally unprovided."

But his declaration only brought from his noble patron an assurance of his own total indifference as to every species of accommodation, and his determination to see the Tower of Wolf's Crag. His ancestor, he said, had been feasted there, when he went forward with the then Lord Ravenswood to the fatal battle of Flodden, in which they both fell. Thus hard pressed, the Master offered to ride forward to get matters put in such preparation as time and circumstances admitted; but the Marquis protested his kinsman must afford him his company, and would only consent that an avant-courier should carry to the destined seneschal, Caleb Balderston, the unexpected news of this invasion.

The Master of Ravenswood soon after accompanied the Marquis in his carriage, as the latter had proposed; and when they became better acquainted in the progress of the journey, his noble relation explained the very liberal views which he entertained for his relation's preferment, in case of the success of his own political schemes. They related to a secret and highly important commission beyond sea, which could only be intrusted to a person of rank, and talent, and perfect confidence, and which as it required great trust and reliance on the envoy employed, could not but prove both honorable and advantageous to him. We need not enter into the nature and purpose of this commission further than to acquaint our readers that the charge was in prospect highly acceptable to the Master of Ravenswood, who hailed with pleasure the hope of emerging

from his present state of indigence and inaction, into independence and honorable exertion. While he listened thus eagerly to the details with which the Marquis now thought it necessary to intrust him, the messenger who had been despatched to the tower of Wolf's Crag, returned with Caleb Balderston's humble duty, and an assurance that "a' should be in seemly order, sic as the hurry of time permitted, to receive their lordships as it behoved."

Ravensood was too well accustomed to his seneschal's mode of acting and speaking to hope much from this confident assurance. He knew that Caleb acted upon the principle of the Spanish generals, in the campaign of——, who, much to the perplexity of the Prince of Orange, their commander-in-chief, used to report their troops as full in number, and possessed of all necessary points of equipment, not considering it consistent with their dignity, or the honor of Spain, to confess any deficiency either in men or munition, until the want of both was unavoidably discovered in the day of battle. Accordingly, Ravenswood thought it necessary to give the Marquis some hint, that the fair assurance which they had just received from Caleb, did not by any means insure them against a very indifferent reception.

"You do yourself injustice, Master," said the Marquis, "or you wish to surprise me agreeably. From this window I see a great light in the direction where, if I remember aright, Wolf's Crag lies; and, to judge from the splendor which the old Tower sheds around it, the preparations for our reception must be of no ordinary description. I remember your father putting the same deception on me, when we went to the Tower for a few days' hawking, about twenty years since, and yet we spent our time as jollily at Wolf's Crag, as we could have done at my own hunting seat at B——."

"Your lordship, I fear, will experience that the faculty of the present proprietor to entertain his friends is greatly abridged," said Ravenswood; "the will, I need hardly say, remains the same. But I am as much at a loss as your lordship to account for so strong and brilliant a light as is now above Wolf's Crag,—the windows of the Tower are few and narrow, and those of the lower storey are hidden from us by the walls of the court. I cannot conceive that any illumination of an ordinary nature could afford such a blaze of light."

The mystery was soon explained; for the cavalcade almost instantly halted, and the voice of Caleb Balderston was heard at the coach window, exclaiming, in accents broken by grief and fear, "Och, gentlemen—Och, my gude lords—Och, haud to the

right!—Wolf's Crag is burning, bower and ha'—a' the rich plenishing outside and inside—a' the fine graith, pictures tapestries, needle-wark, hangings, and other decorements—a' in a bleeze, as if they were nae mair than sae mony peats, or as muckle peas strae! Haud to the right, gentlemen, I implore ye—there is some sma' provision making at Lucky Sma'trash's—but O, wae for this night, and wae for me that lives to see it!”

Ravenswood was at first stunned by this new and unexpected calamity; but after a moment's recollection, he sprang from the carriage, and hastily bidding his noble kinsman good-night, was about to ascend the hill toward the castle, the broad and full conflagration of which now flung forth a high column of red light, that flickered far to seaward upon the dashing waves of the ocean.

“Take a horse, Master,” exclaimed the Marquis, greatly affected by this additional misfortune, so unexpectedly heaped upon his young protégé; “and give me my ambling palfrey,—and haste forward, you knaves, to see what can be done to save the furniture, or to extinguish the fire—ride, you knaves, for your lives!”

The attendants bustled together, and began to strike their horses with the spur, and call upon Caleb to show them the road. But the voice of that careful seneschal was heard above the tumult, “O stop—sirs, stop—turn bridle, for the love of mercy—add not loss of lives to the loss of world's gear!—Thirty barrels of poulder, landed out of a Dunkirk dogger in the auld lord's time a' in the vau'ts of the auld tower,—the fire canna be far aff it, I trow—Lord's sake, to the right, lads—to the right—let's pit the hill atween us and peril—a wap wi' a corner-stane o' Wolf's Crag wad defy the doctor!”

It will readily be supposed that this annunciation hurried the Marquis and his attendants into the route which Caleb prescribed, dragging Ravenswood along with them, although there was much in the matter which he could not possibly comprehend. “Gunpowder!” he exclaimed, laying hold of Caleb, who in vain endeavored to escape from him, “what gunpowder? How any quantity of powder could be in Wolf's Crag without my knowledge, I cannot possibly comprehend.”

“But I can,” interrupted the Marquis, whispering him, “I can comprehend it thoroughly—for God's sake, ask him no more questions at present.”

“There it is now,” said Caleb, extricating himself from his master, and adjusting his dress, “your honor will believe his

lordship's honorable testimony—His lordship minds weel, how, in the year that him they ca'd King Willie died"—

"Hush! hush, my good friend!" said the Marquis: "I shall satisfy your master upon that subject."

"And the people at Wolf's Hope"—said Ravenswood, "did none of them come to your assistance before the flame got so high?"

"Ay did they, mony ane of them, the rapscallions!" said Caleb; "but truly I was in nae hurry to let them into the Tower, where there were so much plate and valuables."

"Confound you for an impudent liar!" said Ravenswood, in uncontrollable ire, "there was not a single ounce of"—

"Forby," said the butler, most irreverently raising his voice to a pitch which drowned his master's, "the fire made fast on us, owing to the store of tapestry and carved timmer in the banqueting ha', and the loons ran like scauded rats sae sune as they heard of the gunpouter."

"I do entreat," said the Marquis to Ravenswood, "you will ask him no more questions."

"Only one, my lord—What has become of poor Mysie?"

"Mysie?" said Caleb, "I had nae time to look about ony Mysie—she's in the Tower, I'se warrant, biding her awful doom."

"By Heaven," said Ravenswood, "I do not understand all this! The life of a faithful old creature is at stake—my lord, I will be withheld no longer—I will at least ride up, and see whether the danger is as imminent as this old fool pretends."

"Weel, then, as I live by bread," said Caleb, "Mysie is weel and safe. I saw her out of the castle before I left it myself. Was I ganging to forget an auld fellow-servant?"

"What made you tell me the contrary this moment?" said his master.

"Did I tell you the contrary?" said Caleb; "then I maun hae been dreaming surely, or this awsome night has turned my judgment—but safe she is, and ne'er a living soul in the castle, a' the better for them—they wad have gotten an unco heezy."

The Master of Ravenswood, upon this assurance being solemnly reiterated, and notwithstanding his extreme wish to witness the last explosion, which was to ruin to the ground the mansion of his fathers, suffered himself to be dragged onward toward the village of Wolf's Hope, where not only the change-house, but that of our well-known friend the cooper, were all prepared for reception of himself and his noble guest, with a liberality of provision which requires some explanation.

We omitted to mention in its place, that Lockhard, having fished out the truth concerning the mode by which Caleb had obtained the supplies for his banquet, the Lord Keeper, amused with the incident, and desirous at the time to gratify Ravenswood, had recommended the cooper of Wolf's Hope to the official situation under Government, the prospect of which had reconciled him to the loss of his wild-fowl. Mr. Girder's preferment had occasioned a pleasing surprise to old Caleb; for when, some days after his master's departure, he found himself absolutely compelled, by some necessary business, to visit the fishing hamlet, and was gliding like a ghost past the door of the cooper, for fear of being summoned to give some account of the progress of the solicitation in his favor, or, more probably, that the inmates might upbraid him with the false hope he had held out upon the subject, he heard himself, not without some apprehension, summoned at once in treble, tenor, and bass,—a trio performed by the voices of Mrs. Girder, old Dame Loup-the-Dyke, and the good man of the dwelling—"Mr. Caleb—Mr. Caleb—Mr. Caleb Balderston! I hope ye arena ganging dry-lipped by our door, and we sae muckle indebted to you?"

This might be said ironically as well as in earnest. Caleb augured the worst, turned a deaf ear to the trio aforesaid, and was moving doggedly on, his ancient castor pulled over his brows, and his eyes bent on the ground, as if to count the flinty pebbles with which the rude pathway was causewayed. But on a sudden he found himself surrounded in his progress, like a stately merchantman in the Gut of Gibraltar (I hope the ladies will excuse the tarpaulin phrase) by three Algerine galleys.

"Gude guide us, Mr. Balderston!" said Mrs. Girder.

"Wha wad hae thought it of an auld and kend friend?" said the mother.

"And no sae muckle as to stay to receive our thanks," said the cooper himself, "and frae the like o' me that seldom offers them? I am sure I hope there's nae ill seed sown between us, Mr. Balderston.—Ony man that has said to ye, I am no gratefu' for the situation of Queen's cooper, let me hae a whamper at him wi' mine catche*—that's a'."

"My good friends—my dear friends," said Caleb, still doubting how the certainty of the matter might stand, "what needs a' this ceremony?—ane tries to serve their friends, and sometimes they may happen to prosper, and sometimes to misgic—

naething I care to be fashed wi' less than thanks—I never could bide them."

"Faith, Mr. Balderston, ye suld hae been fashed wi' few o' mine," said the downright man of staves and hoops, "If I had only your gude-will to thank ye for—I suld e'en hae set the guse, and the wild deukes, and the runlet of sack, to balance that account. Gude-will, man, is a geizen'd tub, that hauds in nae liquor—but gude-deed's like the cask tight, round, and sound, that will haud liquor for the king."

"Have ye no heard of our letter," said the mother-in-law, "making our John the Queen's cooper for certain?—and scarce a chield that had ever hammered gird upon tub but was applying for it?"

"Have I heard!!!" said Caleb (who now found how the wind set), with an accent of exceeding contempt at the doubt expressed—"Have I heard, quo' she!!!"—and as he spoke, he changed his shambling, skulking, dodging pace, into a manly and authoritative step, re-adjusted his cocked hat, and suffered his brow to emerge from under it in all the pride of aristocracy, like the sun from behind a cloud.

"To be sure he canna but hae heard," said the good woman.

"Ay, to be sure, it's impossible but I should," said Caleb; "and sae I'll be the first to kiss ye, joe, and wish you, cooper, much joy of your preferment, naething doubting but ye ken wha are your friends, and *have* helped ye, and *can* help ye. I thought it right to look a wee strange upon it at first," added Caleb, "just to see if ye were made of the right mettle—but ye ring true, lad, ye ring true!"

So saying, with a most lordly air he kissed the woman, and abandoned his hand, with an air of serene patronage, to the hearty shake of Mr. Girder's horn-hard palm. Upon this complete, and to Caleb most satisfactory, information, he did not, it may readily be believed, hesitate to accept an invitation to a solemn feast, to which were invited, not only all the *notables* of the village, but even his ancient antagonist Mr. Dingwall himself. At this festivity he was, of course, the most welcome and most honored guest; and so well did he ply the company with stories of what he could do with his master, his master with the Lord Keeper, the Lord Keeper with the Council, and the Council with the King, that before the company dismissed (which was, indeed, rather at an early hour than a late one), every man of note in the village was ascending to the top-gallant of some ideal preferment by the ladder of ropes which Caleb had presented to their imagination. Nay, the cunning butler regained

in that moment, not only all the influence he possessed formerly over the villagers, when the baronial family which he served were at the proudest, but acquired even an accession of importance. The writer—the very attorney himself—such is the thirst of preferment—felt the force of the attraction, and taking an opportunity to draw Caleb into a corner, spoke, with affectionate regret, of the declining health of the sheriff-clerk of the county.

“An excellent man—a most valuable man, Mr. Caleb—but fat sall I say !—we are peer feckless bodies—here the day, and awa by cock-screech the morn—and if he failzies, there maun be somebody in his place—and gif that ye could airt it my way, I sall be thankful, man—a gluve stuffed wi’ gowd nobles—an’ hark ye, man, something canny till yourself—and the Wolf’s Hope carles to settle kindly wi’ the Master of Ravenswood,—that is, Lord Ravenswood—God bless his lordship !”

A smile, and a hearty squeeze by the hand, was the suitable answer to this overture—and Caleb made his escape from the jovial party in order to avoid committing himself by any special promises.

“The Lord be gude to me !” said Caleb, when he found himself in the open air, and at liberty to give vent to the self-exultation with which he was, as it were, distended ; “did ever ony man see sic a set of green-gaislings !—the very pick-maws and solan-geese out by yonder at the Bass hae ten times their sense !—God, an I had been the Lord High Commissioner to the Estates o’ Parliament, they couldna hae beflummed me mair—and to speak Heaven’s truth, I could hardly hae beflummed them better neither ! But the writer—ha ! ha ! ha ! —ah, ha ! ha ! ha ! mercy on me that I suld live in my auld days to gie the gang-by to the very writer !—Sheriff-clerk !!!—But I hae an auld account to settle wi’ the carle ; and to make amends for byganes, the office shall just cost him as much time-serving as if he were to get in gude earnest—of whilk there is sma’ appearance, unless the Master learns mair the ways of this warld, whilk it is muckle to be doubted that he ever will do.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIFTH.

Why flames the far summit—why shoot to the blast
Those embers, like stars from the firmament cast?—
'Tis the fire-shower of ruin, all dreadfully driven
From his eyry, that beacons the darkness of Heaven.

CAMPBELL.

THE circumstances announced in the conclusion of the last chapter, will account for the ready and cheerful reception of the Marquis of A—— and the Master of Ravenswood in the village of Wolf's Hope. In fact, Caleb had no sooner announced the conflagration of the Tower than the whole hamlet were upon foot to hasten to extinguish the flames. And although that zealous adherent diverted their zeal by intimating the formidable contents of the subterranean apartment, yet the check only turned their assiduity into another direction. Never had there been such slaughtering of capons, and fat geese, and barn-door fowls,—never such boiling of *reested* hams,—never such making of car-cakes and sweet scones, Selkirk bannocks, cookies, and petticoat-tails,—delicacies little known to the present generation. Never had there been such a tapping of barrels, and such uncorking of graybeards, in the village of Wolf's Hope. All the inferior houses were thrown open for the reception of the Marquis's dependants, who came, it was thought, as precursors of the shower of preferment, which hereafter was to leave the rest of Scotland dry, in order to distil its rich dews on the village of Wolf's Hope under Lammermoor. The minister put in his claim to have the guests of distinction lodged at the Manse, having his eye, it was thought, upon a neighboring preferment, where the incumbent was sickly; but Mr. Balderston destined that honor to the cooper, his wife, and wife's mother, who danced for joy at the preference thus assigned them.

Many a beck and many a bow welcomed these noble guests to as good entertainment as persons of such rank could set before such visitors; and the old dame, who had formerly lived in Ravenswood Castle, and knew, as she said, the ways of the nobility, was in no whit wanting in arranging matters, as well as circumstances permitted, according to the etiquette of the times. The cooper's house was so roomy, that each guest had his separate retiring room, to which they were ushered with all

due ceremony, while the plentiful supper was in the act of being placed upon the table.

Ravenswood no sooner found himself alone, than, impelled by a thousand feelings, he left the apartment, the house, and the village, and hastily retraced his steps to the brow of the hill, which rose betwixt the village, and screened it from the tower, in order to view the final fall of the house of his fathers. Some idle boys from the hamlet had taken the same direction out of curiosity, having first witnessed the arrival of the coach-and-six and its attendants. As they ran one by one past the Master, calling to each other to "come and see the auld tower blaw up in the lift like the peelings of an ingan," he could not but feel himself moved with indignation. "And these are the sons of my father's vassals," he said—"of men bound, both by law and gratitude, to follow our steps through battle, and fire, and flood; and now the destruction of their liege-lord's house is but a holiday's sight to them!"

These exasperating reflections were partly expressed in the acrimony with which he exclaimed, on feeling himself pulled by the cloak,—*"What do you want, you dog?"*

"I am a dog, and an auld dog too," answered Caleb, for it was he who had taken the freedom, "and I am like to get a dog's wages—but it does not signification a pinch of sneeshing, for I am ower auld a dog to learn new tricks, or to follow a new master."

As he spoke, Ravenswood attained the ridge of the hill from which Wolf's Crag was visible; the flames had entirely sunk down, and to his great surprise, there was only a dusky reddening upon the clouds immediately over the castle, which seemed the reflection of the embers of the sunken fire.

"The place cannot have blown up," said the Master; "we must have heard the report—if a quarter of the gunpowder was there you tell me of, it would have been heard twenty miles off."

"It's very like it wad," said Balderston, composedly.

"Then the fire cannot have reached the vaults?"

"It's like no," answered Caleb, with the same impenetrable gravity.

"Hark ye, Caleb," said his master, "this grows a little too much for my patience. I must go and examine how matters stand at Wolf's Crag myself."

"Your honor is ganging to gang nae sic gate," said Caleb, firmly.

"And why not?" said Ravenswood, sharply; "who or what shall prevent me?"

"Even I mysell," said Caleb, with the same determination.

"You, Balderston!" replied the Master; "you are forgetting yourself, I think."

"But I think no," said Balderston; "for I can just tell ye a' about the castle on this knowe-head as weel as if ye were at it. Only dinna pit yoursell into a kippage, and expose yoursell before the weans, or before the Marquis, when ye gang downby."

"Speak out, you old fool," replied his master, "and let me know the best and the worst at once."

"Ou, the best and the warst is, just that the tower is standing hale and feir, as safe and as empty as when ye left it."

"Indeed!—and the fire?" said Ravenswood.

"Not a gleed of fire, then, except the bit kindling peat, and maybe a spunk in Mysie's cutty-pipe," replied Caleb.

"But the flame!" demanded Ravenswood; "the broad blaze which might have been seen ten miles off—what occasioned that?"

"Hout awa! it's an auld saying and a true,—

Little's the light
Will be seen in a mirk night.

A wheen fern and horse litter that I fired in the courtyard, after sending back the loon of a footman; and, to speak Heaven's truth, the next time that ye send or bring ony body here, let them be gentles, allenarly without ony fremd servants, like that chield Lockhard, to be gledging and gleeing about, and looking upon the wrang side of ane's housekeeping, to the discredit of the family, and forcing ane to damn their souls wi' telling ae lee after another faster than I can count them—I wad rather set fire to the tower in gude earnest, and burn it ower my ain head into the bargain, or I see the family dishonored in the sort."

"Upon my word, I am infinitely obliged by the proposal, Caleb," said his master, scarce able to restrain his laughter, though rather angry at the same time. "But the gunpowder?—is there such a thing in the tower?—the Marquis seemed to know of it."

"The pouter—ha! ha! ha!—the Marquis—ha! ha! ha!" replied Caleb; "if your honor were to brain me, I behoved to laugh—the Marquis—the pouter!—was it there? ay, it was there. Did he ken o't!—my certie! the Marquis kend o't, and it was the best o' the game; for, when I could not pacify your honor wi' a' that I could say, I aye threw out a word mai

about the gunpouter, and garr'd the Marquis tak the job in his ain hand."

"But you have not answered my question," said the Master, impatiently; "how came the powder there, and where is it now?"

"Ou, it came there, an ye maun needs ken," said Caleb, looking mysteriously and whispering, "when there was like to be a wee bit rising here; and the Marquis, and a' the great lords o' the north, were a' in it, and mony a gudely gun and broadsword were ferried ower frae Dunkirk forby the pouter—awfu' wark we had getting them into the tower under cloud o' night, for ye maun think it wasna everybody could be trusted wi' sic kittle jobs—But if ye will gae hame to your supper, I will tell ye a' about it as ye gang down."

"And these wretched boys," said Ravenswood, "is it your pleasure they are to sit there all night, to wait for the blowing up of a tower that is not even on fire?"

"Surely not, if it is your honor's pleasure that they suld gang hame; although," added Caleb, "it wadna do them a grain's damage—they wad screigh less the next day, and sleep the sounder at e'en—But just as your honor likes."

Stepping accordingly toward the urchins who manned the knolls near which they stood, Caleb informed them, in an authoritative tone, that their honors Lord Ravenswood and the Marquis of A—— had given orders that the tower was not to blow up till next day at noon. The boys dispersed upon this comfortable assurance. One or two, however, followed Caleb for more information, particularly the urchin whom he had cheated while officiating as turnspit, who screamed, "Mr. Balderston! Mr. Balderston's! than the castle's gane out like an auld wife's sump?"

"To be sure it is, callant," said the butler; "do ye think the castle of as great a lord as Lord Ravenswood wad continue in a bleeze, and him standing looking on wi' his ain very een?—It's aye right," continued Caleb, shaking off his ragged page, and closing in to his master, "to train up weans, as the wise man says, in the way they should go, and, aboon a', to teach them respect to their superiors."

"But all this while, Caleb, you have never told me what became of the arms and powder," said Ravenswood.

"Why as for the arms," said Caleb, "it was just like the bairns' rhyme—

(Some gaed east, and some gaed west,
And some gaed to the craw's nest;)

And for the pouter, I e'en changed it, as occasion served, with the skippers o' Dutch luggers and French vessels, for gin and brandy, and it served the house mony a year—a good swap too, between what cheereth the soul of man and that which dingeth it clean out of his body; forby I keepit a wheen pounds of it for yoursell when ye wanted to take the pleasure o' shooting—whiles, in these latter days, I wad hardly hae kend else whar to get pouter for your pleasure.—And now that your anger is ower, sir, wasna that weel managed o' me, and arena you far better sorted down yonder, than ye could hae been in your ain auld ruins upby yonder, as the case stands wi' us now?—the mair's the pity."

"I believe you may be right, Caleb; but, before burning down my castle, either in jest or in earnest," said Ravenswood, "I think I had a right to be in the secret."

"Fie for shame, your honor!" replied Caleb; "it fits an auld carle like me weel enough to tell lees for the credit of the family, but it wadna beseem the like o' your honor's sell; besides, young folk are no judicious—they cannot make the maist of a bit figment. Now this fire—for a fire it shall be, if I suld burn the auld stable to make it mair feasible—this fire, besides that it will be an excuse for asking onything we want through the country, or down at the haven—this fire will settle mony things on an honorable footing for the family's credit, that cost me telling twenty daily lees to a wheen idle chaps and queans, and what's waur, without gaining credence."

"That was hard, indeed, Caleb; but I do not see how this fire should help your veracity or your credit."

"There it is now!" said Caleb; "wasna I saying that young folk had a green judgment?—How suld it help me, quotha?—it will be a creditable apology for the honor of the family for this score of years to come, if it is weel guided. Where's the family pictures? says ae meddling body—the great fire at Wolf's Crag, answers I. Where's the family plate? says another—the great fire, says I; wha was to think of plate, when life and limb were in danger?—Where's the wardrobe and the linens?—where's the tapestries and the decorements?—beds of state, twilts, pands, and testors, napery and broidered wark?—The fire—the fire—the fire. Guide the fire weel, and it will serve ye for a' that ye suld have and have not—and, in some sort, a gude excuse is better than the things themselves; for they maun crack and wear out, and be consumed by time, whereas a gude offcome, prudently and comfortably handled, may serve a nobleman and his family, Lord knows how lang!"

Ravenswood was too well acquainted with his butler's per-

tenacity and self-opinion, to dispute the point with him any further. Leaving Caleb, therefore, to the enjoyment of his own successful ingenuity, he returned to the hamlet, where he found the Marquis and the good women of the mansion under some anxiety—the former on account of his absence, the others for the discredit their cookery might sustain by the delay of the supper. All were now at ease, and heard with pleasure that the fire at the castle had burned out of itself without reaching the vaults, which was the only information that Ravenswood thought it proper to give in public concerning the events of his butler's stratagem.

They sat down to an excellent supper. No invitation could prevail on Mr. and Mrs. Girder, even in their own house, to sit down at table with guests of such high quality. They remained standing in the apartment, and acted the part of respectful and careful attendants on the company. Such were the manners of the time. The elder dame, confident through her age and connection with the Ravenswood family, was less scrupulously ceremonious. She played a mixed part betwixt that of the hostess of an inn, and the mistress of a private house, who receives guests above her own degree.

She recommended, and even pressed, what she thought best, and was herself easily entreated to take a moderate share of the good cheer, in order to encourage her guests by her own example. Often she interrupted herself, to express her regret that "my Lord did not eat—that the Master was pyking a bare bane—that, to be sure, there was naething there fit to set before their honors—that Lord Allan, rest his soul, used to like a pouthered guse, and said it was Latin for a tass o' brandy—that the brandy came from France direct; for, for a' the English laws and gaugers, the Wolf's Hope brigs hadna forgotten the gate to Dunkirk."

Here the cooper admonished his mother-in-law with his elbow, which procured him the following special notice in the progress of her speech :

"Ye needna be dunshin that gate, John," continued the old lady; "naebody says that ye ken whar the brandy comes frae; and it wadna be fitting ye should, and you the Queen's cooper; and what signifies't," continued she, addressing Lord Ravenswood, "to king, queen, or keiser, whar an auld wife like me buys her pickle sneeshin, or her drap brandy-wine, to haud her heart up?"

Having thus extricated herself from her supposed false step, Dame Loup-the-dyke proceeded, during the rest of the evening, to supply, with great animation, and very little assistance from

her guests, the funds necessary for the support of the conversation, until, declining any further circulation of their glass, her guests requested her permission to retire to their apartments.

The Marquis occupied the chamber of dais, which, in every house above the rank of a mere cottage, was kept sacred for such high occasions as the present. The modern finishing with plaster was then unknown, and tapestry was confined to the houses of the nobility and superior gentry. The cooper, therefore, who was a man of some vanity, as well as some wealth, had imitated the fashion observed by the inferior landholders and clergy, who usually ornamented their state apartments with hangings of a sort of stamped leather, manufactured in the Netherlands, garnished with trees and animals executed in copper foil, and with many a pithy sentence of morality, which, although couched in Low Dutch, were perhaps as much attended to in practice as if written in broad Scotch. The whole had somewhat of a gloomy aspect; but the fire, composed of old pitch-barrel staves, blazed merrily up the chimney; the bed was decorated with linen of most fresh and dazzling whiteness, which had never before been used, and might, perhaps, have never been used at all, but for this high occasion. On the toilette beside stood an old-fashioned mirror, in a filigree frame, part of the dispersed finery of the neighboring castle. It was flanked by a long-necked bottle of Florence wine, by which stood a glass nearly as tall resembling in shape that which *Teniers* usually places in the hands of his own portrait, when he paints himself as mingling in the revels of a country village. To counterbalance those foreign sentinels, there mounted guard on the other side of the mirror two stout warders of Scottish lineage; a jug, namely, of double ale, which held a Scotch pint, and a quegh, or bicker, of ivory and ebony, hooped with silver, the work of John Girder's own hands and the pride of his heart. Besides these preparations against thirst, there was a goodly diet-loaf, or sweet-cake; so that, with such auxiliaries, the apartment seemed victualed against a siege of two or three days.

It only remains to say, that the Marquis's valet was in attendance, displaying his master's brocaded night-gown, and richly embroidered velvet cap, lined and faced with Brussels lace, upon a huge leathern easy chair, wheeled round so as to have the full advantage of the comfortable fire which we have already mentioned. We, therefore, commit the eminent person to his night's repose, trusting he profited by the ample preparations made for his accommodation—preparations which we

have mentioned in detail, as illustrative of ancient **Scottish** manners.

It is not necessary we should be equally minute in describing the sleeping apartment of the Master of Ravenswood, which was that usually occupied by the goodman and goodwife themselves. It was comfortably hung with a sort of warm-colored worsted, manufactured in Scotland, approaching in texture to what is now called shaloon. A staring picture of John Girder himself ornamented this dormitory, painted by a starving Frenchman, who had, God knows how or why, strolled over from Flushing or Dunkirk to Wolf's Hope in a smuggling dogger. The features were, indeed, those of the stubborn, opinionative, yet sensible artisan, but Monsieur had contrived to throw a French grace into the look and manner, so utterly inconsistent with the dogged gravity of the original, that it was impossible to look at it without laughing. John and his family, however, piqued themselves not a little upon this picture, and were proportionably censured by the neighborhood, who pronounced that the cooper, in sitting for the same, and yet more in presuming to hang it up in his bedchamber, had exceeded his privilege as the richest man of the village; at once stepped beyond the bounds of his own rank, and encroached upon those of the superior orders; and, in fine, had been guilty of a very overweening act of vanity and presumption. Respect for the memory of my deceased friend, Mr. Richard Tinto,* has obliged me to treat this matter at some length; but I spare the reader his prolix, though curious observations, as well upon the character of the French School, as upon the state of painting in Scotland, at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The other preparations of the Master's sleeping apartment were similar to those in the chamber of dais.

At the usual early hour of that period, the Marquis of A— and his kinsman prepared to resume their journey. This could not be done without an ample breakfast, in which cold meat and hot meat, and oatmeal flummery, wine and spirits and milk varied by every possible mode of preparation, evinced the same desire to do honor to their guests which had been shown by the hospitable owners of the mansion upon the evening before. All the bustle of preparation for departure now resounded through Wolf's Hope. There was paying of bills and shaking of hands, and saddling of horses, and harnessing of carriages, and distributing of drink-money. The Marquis left a broad piece for the gratification of John Girder's household, which he, the said John, was for some time disposed to convert to his own

* [See Preliminary Chapter.]

use ; Dingwall the writer assuring him he was justified in so doing, seeing he was the disburser of those expenses which were the occasion of the gratification. But, notwithstanding this legal authority, John could not find in his heart to dim the splendor of his late hospitality, by pocketing anything in the nature of a gratuity. He only assured his menials he would consider them as a damned ungrateful pack, if they bought a gill of brandy elsewhere than out of his own stores ; and as the drink-money was likely to go to its legitimate use he comforted himself that, in this manner, the Marquis's donative would, without any impeachment of credit and character, come ultimately into his own exclusive possession.

While arrangements were making for departure, Ravenswood made blithe the heart of his ancient butler, by informing him, cautiously however (for he knew Caleb's warmth of imagination), of the probable change which was about to take place in his fortunes. He deposited with Balderston, at the same time, the greater part of his slender funds, with an assurance, which he was obliged to reiterate more than once, that he himself had sufficient supplies in certain prospect. He, therefore, enjoined Caleb, as he valued his favor, to desist from all further manœuvres against the inhabitants of Wolf's Hope, their cellars, poultry yards, and substance whatsoever. In this prohibition the old domestic acquiesced more readily than his master expected.

"It was doubtless," he said, "a shame, a discredit, and a sin, to harry the puir creatures, when the family were in circumstances to live honorably on their ain means ; and there might be wisdom," he added, "in giving them a while's breathing time at any rate, that they might be the more readily brought forward upon his honor's future occasions."

This matter being settled, and having taking an affectionate farewell of his old domestic, the Master rejoined his noble relative, who was now ready to enter his carriage. The two landladies, old and young, having received in all kindly greeting, a kiss from each of their noble guests, stood simpering at the door of their house, as the coach-and-six, followed by its train of clattering horsemen, thundered out of the village. John Girder also stood upon his threshold, now looking at his honored right hand, which had been so lately shaken by a marquis and a lord, and now giving a glance into the interior of his mansion, which manifested all the disarray of the late revel, as if balancing the distinction which he had attained with the expenses of the entertainment.

At length he opened his oracular jaws. "Let every man and

woman here set about their ain business, as if there was nae sic thing as marquis or, master, duke or drake, laird or lord, in this world. Let the house be redd up, the broken meat set by, and if there is onything totally uneatable, let it be gien to the puir folk ; and, gudemother and wife, I hae just ae thing to entreat ye, that ye will never speak to me a single word, good or bad, anent a' this nonsense wark, but keep a' your cracks about it to yoursells and your kimmers, for my head is weelnigh dung donnart wi it already."

As John's authority was tolerably absolute, all departed to their usual occupations leaving him to build castles in the air, if he had a mind, upon the court favor which he had acquired by the expenditure of his worldly substance.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIXTH.

Why, now I have Dame Fortune by the forelock,
And if she escapes my grasp, the fault is mine ;
He that hath buffeted with stern adversity,
Best knows to shape his course to favoring breezes.
OLD PLAY.

OUR travelers reached Edinburgh without any farther adventure, and the Master of Ravenswood, as had been previously settled, took up his abode with his noble friend.

In the meantime, the political crisis which had been expected took place, and the Tory party obtained, in the Scottish, as in the English councils of Queen Anne, a short-lived ascendancy, of which it is not our business to trace either the cause or consequences. Suffice it to say, that it affected the different political parties according to the nature of their principles. In England, many of the High Church party, with Harley, afterward Earl of Oxford, at their head, affected to separate their principles from those of the Jacobites, and, on that account, obtained the denomination of Whimsicals. The Scottish High Church party, on the contrary, or, as they termed themselves, the Cavaliers, were more consistent, if not so prudent, in their politics, and viewed all the changes now made as preparatory to calling to the throne, upon the Queen's demise, her brother, the Chevalier de St. George. Those who had suffered in his service, now entertained the most unreasonable hopes, not only of indemnification, but of vengeance upon their political adversaries ; while families attached to the Whig interest, saw nothing

before them but a renewal of the hardships they had undergone during the reigns of Charles the Second and his brother, and a retaliation of the confiscation which had been inflicted upon the Jacobites during that of King William.

But the most alarmed at the change of system, was that prudential set of persons some of whom are found in all governments, but who abound in a provincial administration like that of Scotland during the period, and who are what Cromwell called waiters upon Providence, or, in other words, uniform adherents to the party who are uppermost. Many of these hastened to read their recantation to the Marquis of A——; and, as it was easily seen that he took a deep interest in the affairs of his kinsman, the Master of Ravenswood, they were the first to suggest measures for retrieving at least a part of his property, and for restoring him in blood against his father's attainder.

Old Lord Turntippet professed to be one of the most anxious for the success of these measures; for, "it grieved him to the very saul," he said, "to see so brave a young gentleman, of sic auld and undoubted nobility, and what was mair than a' that, a bluid relation of the Marquis of A——, the man whom," he swore, "he honored most upon the face of the yearth, brought to so severe a pass. For his ain puir peculiar," as he said, "and to contribute something to the rehabilitation of sic auld ane house," the said Turntippet sent in three family pictures lacking the frames, and six high-backed chairs, with worked Turkey cushions, having the crest of Ravenswood broidered thereon, without charging a penny either of the principal or interest they had cost him, when he bought them, sixteen years before, at a roup of the furniture of Lord Ravenswood's lodgings in the Canongate.

Much more to Lord Turntippet's dismay than to his surprise, although he affected to feel more of the latter than the former, the Marquis received his gift very drily, and observed, that his lordship's restitution, if he expected it to be received by the Master of Ravenswood and his friends, must comprehend a pretty large farm, which, having been mortgaged to Turntippet for a very inadequate sum, he had contrived, during the confusion of the family affairs, and by means well understood by the lawyers of the period, to acquire to himself in absolute property,

The old time-serving lord winced excessively under this requisition, protesting to God, that he saw no occasion the lad could have for the instant possession of the land, seeing he would doubtless now recover the bulk of his estate from Sir

William Ashton, to which he was ready to contribute by every means in his power, as was just and reasonable; and finally declaring, that he was willing to settle the land on the young gentleman, after his own natural demise.

But all these excuses availed nothing, and he was compelled to disgorge the property, on receiving back the sum for which it had been mortgaged. Having no other means of making peace with the higher powers, he returned home sorrowful and malcontent, complaining to his confidants, "that every mutation or change in the state had hitherto been productive of some sma' advantage to him in his ain quiet affairs; but that the present had (pize upon it!) cost him one of the best pen-feathers o' his wing."

Similar measures were threatened against others who had profited by the wreck of the fortune of Ravenswood; and Sir William Ashton, in particular, was menaced with an appeal to the House of Peers against the judicial sentences under which he held the Castle and Barony of Ravenswood. With him, however, the Master, as well for Lucy's sake as on account of the hospitality he had received from him, felt himself under the necessity of proceeding with great candor. He wrote to the late Lord Keeper, for he no longer held that office, stating frankly the engagement which existed between him and Miss Ashton, requesting his permission for their union, and assuring him of his willingness to put the settlement of all matters between them upon such a footing, as Sir William himself should think favorable.

The same messenger was charged with a letter to Lady Ashton, deprecating any cause of displeasure which the Master might unintentionally have given her, enlarging upon his attachment to Miss Ashton, and the length to which it had proceeded, and conjuring the lady, as a Douglas in nature as well as in name, generously to forget ancient prejudices and misunderstandings; and to believe that the family had acquired a friend, and she herself a respectful and attached humble servant, in him who subscribed himself Edgar, Master of Ravenswood.

A third letter Ravenswood addressed to Lucy, and the messenger was instructed to find some secret and secure means of delivering it into her own hands. It contained the strongest protestations of continued affection, and dwelt upon the approaching change of the writer's fortunes, as chiefly valuable by tending to remove the impediments to their union. He related the steps he had taken to overcome the prejudices of her parents, and especially of her mother, and expressed his hopes they might prove effectual. If not, he still

trusted that his absence from Scotland upon an important and honorable mission might give time for prejudices to die away; while he hoped and trusted Miss Ashton's constancy, on which he had the most implicit reliance, would baffle any effort that might be used to divert her attachment. Much more there was, which however interesting to the lovers themselves, would afford the reader neither interest nor information. To each of these three letters the Master of Ravenswood received an answer, but by different means of conveyance, and certainly couched in very different styles.

Lady Ashton answered his letter by his own messenger, who was not allowed to remain at Ravenswood a moment longer than she was engaged in penning these lines. "For the hand of Mr. Ravenswood of Wolf's Crag—These :

"SIR, UNKNOWN—I have received a letter, signed Edgar, Master of Ravenswood, concerning the writer whereof I am uncertain, seeing that the honors of such a family were forfeited for high treason in the person of Allan, late Lord Ravenswood. Sir, if you shall happen to be the person so subscribing yourself, you will please to know, that I claim the full interest of a parent in Miss Lucy Ashton, which I have disposed of irrevocably in behalf of a worthy person. And, sir, were this otherwise, I would not listen to a proposal from you, or any of your house, seeing their hand has been uniformly held up against the freedom of the subject, and the immunities of God's kirk. Sir, it is not a flightering blink of prosperity which can change my constant opinion in this regard, seeing it has been my lot before now, like holy David, to see the wicked great in power, and flourishing like a green bay-tree; nevertheless I passed, and they were not, and the place thereof knew them no more. Wishing you to lay these things to your heart for your own sake so far as they may concern you, I pray you to take no further notice of her, who desires to remain your unknown servant,

MARGARET DOUGLAS, otherwise ASHTON."

About two days after he had received this very unsatisfactory epistle, the Master of Ravenswood, while walking up the High Street of Edinburgh, was jostled by a person, in whom, as the man pulled off his hat to make an apology, he recognized Lockhard, the confidential domestic of Sir William Ashton. The man bowed, slipped a letter into his hand, and disappeared. The packet contained four closely-written folios, from which, however, as is sometimes incident to the compositions of great

lawyers, little could be extracted excepting that the writer felt himself in a very puzzling predicament.

Sir William spoke at length of his high value and regard for his dear young friend, the Master of Ravenswood, and of his very extreme high value and regard for the Marquis of A——, his very dear old friend:—he trusted that any measures that they might adopt, in which he was concerned, would be carried on with due regard to the sanctity of decreets, and judgments obtained *in foro contentioso*; protesting, before men and angels, that if the law of Scotland, as declared in her supreme courts, were to undergo a reversal in the English House of Lords, the evils which would thence arise to the public would inflict a greater wound upon his heart, than any loss he might himself sustain by such irregular proceedings. He flourished much on generosity and forgiveness of mutual injuries, and hinted at the mutability of human affairs, always favorite topics with the weaker party in politics. He pathetically lamented and gently censured, the haste which had been used in depriving him of his situation of Lord Keeper,* which his experience had enabled him to fill with some advantage to the public, without so much as giving him an opportunity of explaining how far his own views of general politics might essentially differ from those now in power. He was convinced the Marquis of A—— had as sincere intentions toward the public, as himself or any man; and if, upon a conference, they could have agreed upon the measures by which it was to be pursued, his experience and his interest should have gone to support the present administration. Upon the engagement betwixt Ravenswood and his daughter, he spoke in a dry and confused manner. He regretted so premature a step as the engagement of the young people should have been taken, and conjured the Master to remember he had never given any encouragement thereunto; and observed, that, as a transaction *inter minores*, and without concurrence of his daughter's natural curators, the engagement was inept and void in law. This precipitate measure, he added, had produced a very bad effect upon Lady Ashton's mind, which it was impossible at present to remove. Her son, Colonel Douglas Ashton, had embraced her prejudices in the fullest extent, and it was impossible for Sir William to adopt a course disagreeable to them, without a fatal and irreconcilable breach in his family, which was not at present to be thought of. Time, the great physician, he hoped, would mend all.

In a postscript, Sir William said something more explicitly, which seemed to intimate, that rather than the law of Scotland

*[This obviously cannot apply to Sir James Dalrymple, Lord Stair, who was then dead, and had never been deprived of any such office.]

should sustain a severe wound through his sides, by a reversal of the judgment of her supreme courts, in the case of the Barony of Ravenswood, through the intervention of what, with all submission, he must term a foreign court of appeal, he himself would extrajudicially consent to considerable sacrifices.

From Lucy Ashton, by some unknown conveyance, the Master received the following lines :—" I received yours, but it was at the utmost risk ; do not attempt to write again till better times. I am sore beset, but I will be true to my word, while the exercise of my reason is vouchsafed to me. That you are happy and prosperous is some consolation, and my situation requires it all." The note was signed L. A.

This letter filled Ravenswood with the most lively alarm. He made many attempts, notwithstanding her prohibition to convey letters to Miss Ashton, and even to obtain an interview ; but his plans were frustrated, and he had only the mortification to learn, that anxious and effectual precautions had been taken to prevent the possibility of their correspondence. The Master was the more distressed by these circumstances, as it became impossible to delay his departure from Scotland, upon the important mission which had been confined to him. Before his departure, he put Sir William Ashton's letter into the hands of the Marquis of A——, who observed with a smile, that Sir William's days of grace was past, and that he had now to learn which side of the hedge the sun had got to. It was with the greatest difficulty that Ravenswood extorted from the Marquis a promise that he would compromise the proceedings in Parliament, providing Sir William should be disposed to acquiesce in a union between him and Lucy Ashton.

" I would hardly," said the Marquis, " consent to your throwing away your birthright in this manner, were I not perfectly confident that Lady Ashton, or Lady Douglas, or whatever she calls herself, will, as Scotchmen say, keep her threep ; and that her husband dares not contradict her."

" But yet," said the Master, " I trust your lordship will consider my engagement as sacred ?"

" Believe my word of honor," said the Marquis, " I would be a friend even to your follies ; and having thus told you my opinion, I will endeavor, as occasion offers, to serve you according to your own."

The Master of Ravenswood could but thank his generous kinsman and patron, and leave him full power to act in all his affairs. He departed from Scotland upon his mission, which, it was supposed, might detain him upon the Continent for **some months**.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVENTH.

Was ever woman in this humor wooed ?
Was ever woman in this humor won ?
I'll have her.

RICHARD THE THIRD.

TWELVE months had passed away since the Master of Ravenswood's departure for the Continent, and although his return to Scotland had been expected in a much shorter space, yet the affairs of his mission, or, according to a prevailing report, others of a nature personal to himself, still detained him abroad. In the meantime, the altered state of affairs in Sir William Ashton's family may be gathered from the following conversation which took place betwixt Bucklaw and his confidential bottle-companion and dependant, the noted Captain Craigengelt.

They were seated on either side of the huge sepulchral-looking freestone chimney in the low hall at Girnington. A wood fire blazed merrily in the grate ; a round oaken table placed between them, supported a stoup of excellent claret, two rummer glasses, and other good cheer ; and yet, with all these appliances and means to boot, the countenance of the patron was dubious, doubtful, and unsatisfied, while the invention of his dependant was taxed to the utmost, to parry what he most dreaded, a fit, as he called it, of the sullen, on the part of his protector. After a long pause, only interrupted by the devil's tattoo, which Bucklaw kept beating against the hearth with the toe of his boot, Craigengelt at last ventured to break silence. "May I be double-distanced," said he, "if ever I saw a man in my life have less the air of a bridegroom? Cut me out of feather, if you have not more the look of a man condemned to be hanged !"

"My kind thanks for the compliment," replied Bucklaw ; "but I suppose you think upon the predicament in which you yourself are most likely to be placed ;—and pray, Captain Craigengelt, if it please your worship, why should I look merry, when I am sad, and devilish sad too ?"

"And that's what vexes me," said Craigengelt. "Here is this match, the best in the whole country, and which you were so anxious about, is on the point of being concluded, and you are as sulky as a bear that has lost his whelps."

"I do not know," answered the Laird doggedly, "whether

I should conclude it or not, if it was not that I am too far forward to leap back."

"Leap back!" exclaimed Craigenfelt, with a well-assumed air of astonishment, "that would be playing the back-game with a witness! Leap back! why is not the girl's fortune?"——

"The young lady's, if you please," said Hayston, interrupting him.

"Well, well, no disrespect meant — Will Miss Ashton's tocher* not weigh against any in Lothian?"

"Granted," answered Bucklaw; "but I care not a penny for her tocher—I have enough of my own."

"And the mother that loves you like her own child?"

"Better than some of her children, I believe," said Bucklaw, "or there would be little love wared on the matter."

"And Colonel Sholto Douglas Ashton, who desires the marriage above all earthly things?"

"Because," said Bucklaw, "he expects to carry the county of —— through my interest."

"And the father, who is as keen to see the match concluded, as ever I have been to win a main?"

"Ay," said Bucklaw, in the same disparaging manner, "it lies with Sir William's policy to secure the next best match, since he cannot barter his child to save the great Ravenswood estate, which the English House of Lords are about to wrench out of his clutches."

"What say you to the young lady herself?" said Craigenfelt; "the finest young woman in all Scotland, one that you used to be so fond of when she was cross, and now she consents to have you, and gives up her engagement with Ravenswood, you are for jibbing—I must say, the devil's in ye, when ye neither know what you would have, nor what you would want."

"I'll tell you my meaning in a word," answered Bucklaw, getting up and walking through the room; "I want to know what the devil is the cause of Miss Ashton's changing her mind so suddenly?"

"And what need you care," said Craigenfelt, "since the change is in your favor?"

"I'll tell you what it is," returned his patron, "I never knew much of that sort of fine ladies, and I believe they may be as capricious as the devil; but there is something in Miss Ashton's change, a devilish deal too sudden and too serious for a mere flisk of her own. I'll be bound Lady Ashton understands every machine for breaking in the human mind, and

* [*Anglicè*, dowry.]

there are as many as there are cannon-bits, martingales, and cavessons for young colts."

"And if that were not the case," said Craigengelt, "how the devil should we ever get them into training at all?"

"And that's true, too," said Bucklaw, suspending his march through the dining-room, and leaning upon the back of a chair—"And besides, here's Ravenswood in the way still; do you think he'll give up Lucy's engagement?"

"To be sure he will," answered Craigengelt; "what good can it do him to refuse, since he wishes to marry another woman, and she another man?"

"And you believe seriously," said Bucklaw, "that he is going to marry the foreign lady we heard of?"

"You heard yourself," answered Craigengelt, "what Captain Westenho said about it, and the great preparations made for their blithesome bridal."

"Captain Westenho," replied Bucklaw, "has rather too much of your own cast about him, Craigie, to make what Sir William would call a 'famous witness.' He drinks deep, plays deep, swears deep, and I suspect can lie and cheat a little into the bargain;—useful qualities, Craigie, if kept in their proper sphere, but which have a little too much of the freebooter to make a figure in a court of evidence."

"Well, then," said Craigengelt, "will you believe Colonel Douglas Ashton, who heard the Marquis of A—— say in a public circle, but not aware that he was within ear-shot, that his kinsman had made a better arrangement for himself than to give his father's land for the pale-cheeked daughter of a broken-down fanatic, and that Bucklaw was welcome to the wearing of Ravenswood's shaughled shoes?"

"Did he say so, by heavens!" cried Bucklaw, breaking out into one of those uncontrollable fits of passion to which he was constitutionally subject—"if I had heard him, I would have torn the tongue out of his throat before all his pets and minions, and Highland bullies into the bargain. Why did not Ashton run him through the body?"

"Capote me if I know," said the Captain. "He deserved it sure enough; but he is an old man, and a minister of state, and there would be more risk than credit in meddling with him. You had more need to think of making up to Miss Lucy Ashton the disgrace that's like to fall upon her, than of interfering with a man too old to fight, and on too high a stool for your hand to reach him."

"It *shall* reach him, though, one day," said Bucklaw, "and his kinsman Ravenswood to boot. In the meantime, I'll take

are Miss Ashton receives no discredit for the slight they have put upon her. It's an awkward job, however, and I wish it were ended ; I scarce know how to talk to her,—but fill a bumper, Craigie, and we'll drink her health. It grows late, and a night-cowl of good claret is worth all the considering-caps in Europe."

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHTH.

It was the copy of our conference.
 In bed she slept not, for my urging it ;
 At board she fed not, for my urging it ;
 Alone, it was the subject of my theme ;
 In company I often glanced at it.

COMEDY OF ERRORS.

THE next morning saw Bucklaw, and his faithful Achates Craigengelt, at Ravenswood Castle. They were most courteously received by the knight and his lady, as well as by their son and heir, Colonel Ashton. After a good deal of stammering and blushing,—for Bucklaw, notwithstanding his audacity in other matters, had all the sheepish bashfulness common to those who have lived little in respectable society,—he contrived at length to explain his wish to be admitted to a conference with Miss Ashton, upon the subject of their approaching union. Sir William and his son looked at Lady Ashton, who replied with the greatest composure, " that Lucy would wait upon Mr. Hayston directly. I hope," she added with a smile, " that, as Lucy is very young, and has been lately trepanned into an engagement, of which she is now heartily ashamed, our dear Bucklaw will excuse her wish, that I should be present at their interview ? "

" In truth, my dear lady," said Bucklaw, " it is the very thing that I would have desired on my own account ; for I have been so little accustomed to what is called gallantry, that I shall certainly fall into some cursed mistake, unless I have the advantage of your ladyship as an interpreter."

It was thus that Bucklaw, in the perturbation of his embarrassment upon this critical occasion, forgot the just apprehensions he had entertained of Lady Ashton's overbearing ascendancy over her daughter's mind, and lost an opportunity of ascertaining, by his own investigation, the real state of Lucy's feelings.

The other gentlemen left the room, and in a short time, Lady Ashton, followed by her daughter, entered the apartment,

She appeared, as he had seen her on former occasions, rather composed than agitated ; but a nicer judge than he could scarce have determined, whether her calmness was that of despair or of indifference. Bucklaw was too much agitated by his own feelings minutely to scrutinize those of the lady. He stammered out an unconnected address, confounding together the two or three topics to which it related, and stopped short before he brought it to any regular conclusion. Miss Ashton listened, or looked as if she listened, but returned not a single word in answer, continuing to fix her eyes on a small piece of embroidery, on which, as if by instinct or habit, her fingers were busily employed. Lady Ashton sat at some distance, almost screened from notice by the deep embrasure of the window in which she had placed her chair. From this she whispered, in a tone of voice, which, though soft and sweet, had something in it of admonition, if not command,—“ Lucy, my dear, remember—have you heard what Bucklaw has been saying ? ”

The idea of her mother's presence seemed to have slipped from the unhappy girl's recollection. She started, dropped her needle, and repeated hastily, and almost in the same breath, the contradictory answers, “ Yes, madam—no, lady—I beg pardon, I did not hear.”

“ You need not blush, my love, and still less need you look so pale and frightened,” said Lady Ashton, coming forward ; “ we know that maiden's ears must be slow in receiving a gentleman's language ; but you must remember Mr. Hayston speaks on a subject on which you have long since agreed to give him a favorable hearing. You know how much your father and I have our hearts set upon an event so extremely desirable.”

In Lady Ashton's voice, a tone of impressive and even stern innuendo was sedulously and skilfully concealed, under an appearance of the most affectionate maternal tenderness. The manner was for Bucklaw, who was easily enough imposed upon ; the matter of the exhortation was for the terrified Lucy, who well knew how to interpret her mother's hints, however skilfully their real purport might be veiled from general observation.

Miss Ashton sat upright in her chair, cast round her a glance, in which fear was mingled with a still wilder expression, but remained perfectly silent. Bucklaw, who had in the meantime paced the room to and fro, until he had recovered his composure, now stopped within two or three yards of her chair, and broke out as follows :—“ I believe I have been a d—d fool. Miss Ashton ; I have tried to speak to you as people tell me, young ladies like to be talked to, and I don't think you comprehend what I have been saying ; and no wonder, for d—n

me if I understand it myself ! But, however, once for all, and in broad Scotch, your father and mother like what is proposed, and if you can take a plain young fellow for your husband, who will never cross you in anything you have a mind to, I will place you at the head of the best establishment in the three Lothians ; you shall have Lady Girnington's lodging in the Canongate of Edinburgh, go where you please, do what you please, and see what you please, and that's fair. Only I must have a corner at the board-end for a worthless old play-fellow of mine, whose company I would rather want than have, if it were not that the d—d fellow has persuaded me that I can't do without him ; and so I hope you won't except against Craigie, although it might be easy to find much better company."

"Now, out upon you, Bucklaw, said Lady Ashton, again interposing,—“how can you think Lucy can have any objection to that blunt, honest, good-natured creature, Captain Craigen-gelt ?”

"Why, madam," replied Bucklaw, "as to Craigie's sincerity honesty, and good nature, they are, I believe, pretty much upon a par—But that's neither here nor there—the fellow knows my ways, and has got useful to me, and I cannot well do without him, as I said before. But all this is nothing to the purpose ; for since I have mustered up courage to make a plain proposal, I would fain hear Miss Ashton, from her own lips, give me a plain answer."

"My dear Bucklaw," said Lady Ashton, "let me spare Lucy's bashfulness. I tell you in her presence, that she has already consented to be guided by her father and me in this matter—Lucy, my love," she added, with that singular combination of suavity of tone and pointed energy which we have already noticed—"Lucy, my dearest love ! speak for yourself, is it not as I say ?"

Her victim answered in a tremulous and hollow voice—"I *have* promised to obey you,—but upon one condition."

"She means," said Lady Ashton, turning to Bucklaw, "she expects an answer to the demand which was made upon the man at Vienna, or Ratisbon, or Paris—or where is he—for restitution of the engagement in which he had the art to involve her. You will not, I am sure, my dear friend, think it is wrong that she should feel much delicacy upon this head ; indeed, it concerns us all."

"Perfectly right—quite fair," said Bucklaw, half humming half speaking the end of the old song—

"It is best to be off wi' the old love
Before you be on wi' the new."

But I thought," said he, pausing, "you might have had an answer six times told from Ravenswood. D—n me, if I have not a mind to go and fetch one myself, if Miss Ashton will honor me with the commission."

"By no means," said Lady Ashton, "we have the utmost difficulty of preventing Douglas (for whom it would be more proper) from taking so rash a step; and do you think we could permit you, my good friend, almost equally dear to us, to go to a desperate man upon an errand so desperate? In fact, all the friends of the family are of opinion, and my dear Lucy herself ought so to think, that, as this unworthy person has returned no answer to her letter, silence must on this, as in other cases, be held to give consent, and a contract must be supposed to be given up, when the party waives insisting upon it. Sir William, who should know best, is clear upon this subject; and therefore, my dear Lucy"—

"Madam," said Lucy, with unwonted energy, "urge me no further—if this unhappy engagement be restored, I have already said you shall dispose of me as you will—till then I should commit a heavy sin in the sight of God and man, in doing what you require."

"But, my love, if this man remains obstinately silent"—

"He will *not* be silent," answered Lucy; "it is six weeks since I sent him a double of my former letter by a sure hand."

"You have not—you could not—you durst not," said Lady Ashton, with violence inconsistent with the tone she had intended to assume; but instantly correcting herself, "My dearest Lucy," said she in her sweetest tone of expostulation, "how could you think of such a thing?"

"No matter," said Bucklaw; "I respect Miss Ashton for her sentiments, and I only wish I had been her messenger myself."

"And pray how long, Miss Ashton," said her mother ironically, "are we to wait the return of your Pacolet—your fairy messenger—since our humble couriers of flesh and blood could not be trusted in this matter?"

"I have numbered weeks, days, hours, and minutes," said Miss Ashton; "within another week I shall have an answer, unless he is dead.—Till that time, sir," she said, addressing Bucklaw, "let me be thus far beholden to you, that you will beg my mother to forbear me upon this subject."

"I will make it my particular entreaty to Lady Ashton," said Bucklaw. "By my honor, madam, I respect your feelings; and, although the prosecution of this affair be rendered dearer

to me than ever, yet, as I am a gentleman, I would renounce it were it so urged as to give you a moment's pain."

"Mr. Hayston, I think, cannot apprehend that," said Lady Ashton, looking pale with anger, "when the daughter's happiness, lies in the bosom of the mother.—Let me ask you Miss Ashton in what terms your last letter was couched?"

"Exactly in the same, madam," answered Lucy, "which you dictated on a former occasion."

"When eight days have elapsed, then," said her mother, resuming her tone of tenderness, "we shall hope, my dearest love, that you will end this suspense."

"Miss Ashton must not be hurried, madam," said Bucklaw, whose bluntness of feeling did not by any means arise from want of good nature—"messengers may be stopped or delayed. I have known a day's journey broke by the casting of a fore-shoe. Stay, let me see my calendar—the 20th day from this is St. Jude's, and the day before I must be at Caverton Edge to see the match between the Laird of Kittlegirth's black mare and Johnston the meal-monger's four-year-old colt; but I can ride all night, or Craigie can bring me word how the match goes; and I hope, in the meantime, as I shall not myself distress Miss Ashton with any further importunity, that your ladyship yourself, and Sir William, and Colonel Douglas, will have the goodness to allow her uninterrupted time for making up her mind."

"Sir," said Miss Ashton, "you are generous."

"As for that, madam, answered Bucklaw, "I only pretend to be a plain, good-humored young fellow, as I said before, who will willingly make you happy if you will permit him, and show him how to do so."

Having said this, he saluted her with more emotion than was consistent with his usual train of feeling, and took his leave; Lady Ashton, as she accompanied him out of the apartment, assuring him that her daughter did full justice to the sincerity of his attachment, and requesting him to see Sir William before his departure, "since," as she said, with a keen glance reverting toward Lucy, "against St. Jude's day we must all be ready to *sign and seal*."

"To sign and seal!" echoed Lucy in a muttering tone as the door of the apartment closed—"To sign and seal—to do and die!" and, clasping her extenuated hands together, she sunk back on the easy-chair she occupied, in a state resembling stupor.

From this she was shortly after awakened by the boisterous entry of her brother Henry, who clamorously reminded her of

a promise to give him two yards of carnation ribbon to **make** knots to his new garters. With the most patient composure Lucy arose, and opened a little ivory cabinet, sought out the ribbon the lad wanted, measured it accurately, cut it off into proper lengths, and knoted into the fashion his boyish whim required.

"Dinna shut the cabinet yet," said Henry, "for I must have some of your silver wire to fasten the belis to my hawk's jesses, —and yet the new falcon's not worth them neither; for do you know, after all the plague we had to get her from an eyry, all the way at Posso, in Manor Water, she's going to prove, after all, nothing better than a trifler—she just wets her singles in the blood of a partridge, and then breaks away, and lets her fly; and what good can the poor bird do after that, you know, except pine and die in the first heather-cow or whin-bush she can crawl into?"

"Right, Henry—right, very right," said Lucy, mournfully, holding the boy fast by the hand, after she had given him the wire he wanted; "but there are more triflers in the world than your falcon, and more wounded birds that seek but to die in quiet, that can find neither brake nor whin-bush to hide their heads in."

"Ah! that's some speech out of your romances," said the boy; "and Sholto says they have turned your head. But I hear Norman whistling to the hawk; I must go fasten on the jesses."

And he scampered away with the thoughtless gayety of boyhood, leaving his sister to the bitterness of her own reflections.

"It is decreed," she said, "that every living creature, even those who owe me most kindness, are to shun me, and leave me to those by whom I am beset. It is just it should be thus. Alone and uncounseled, I involved myself in these ~~perils—~~
alone and uncounseled I must extricate myself or die."

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINTH.

—— What doth ensue
 But moody and dull melancholy,
 Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair,
 And, at her heels, a huge infectious troop
 Of pale distemperatures, and foes to life?

COMEDY OF ERRORS.

As some vindication of the ease with which Bucklaw (who otherwise, as he termed himself, was really a very good-humored fellow) resigned his judgment to the management of Lady Ashton, while paying his addresses to her daughter, the reader must call to mind the strict domestic discipline, which, at this period, was exercised over the females of a Scottish family.

The manners of the country in this, as in many other respects, coincided with those of France before the Revolution. Young women of the higher ranks seldom mingled in society until after marriage, and, both in law and fact, were held to be under the strict tutelage of their parents, who were too apt to enforce the views for their settlement in life, without paying any regard to the inclination of the parties chiefly interested. On such occasions, the suitor expected little more from his bride than a silent acquiescence in the will of her parents; and as few opportunities of acquaintance, far less of intimacy, occurred, he made his choice by the outside, as the lovers in the Merchant of Venice select the casket, contented to trust to chance in the issue of the lottery, in which he had hazarded a venture.

It was not therefore surprising, such being the general manners of the age, that Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw, whom dissipated habits had detached in some degree from the best society, should not attend particularly to those feelings in his elected bride to which many men of more sentiment, experience, and reflection, would, in all probability, have been equally indifferent. He knew what all accounted the principal point, that her parents and friends, namely, were decidedly in his favor, and there existed most powerful reasons for their predilection.

In truth, the conduct of the Marquis of A—— since Ravenswood's departure, had been such as almost to bar the possi

bility of his kinsman's union with Lucy Ashton. The Marquis was Ravenswood's sincere, but misjudging friend; or rather, like many friends and patrons, he consulted what he considered to be his relation's true interest, although he knew that in doing so he ran counter to his inclinations.

The Marquis drove on, therefore, with the plentitude of ministerial authority, an appeal to the British House of Peers against those judgments of the courts of law, by which Sir William became possessed of Ravenswood's hereditary property. As this measure, enforced with all the authority of power, was new in Scottish judicial proceedings, though now so frequently resorted to, it was exclaimed against by the lawyers on the opposite side of politics, as an interference with the civil judicature of the country, equally new, arbitrary, and tyrannical. And if it thus affected even strangers connected with them only by political party, it may be guessed what the Ashton family themselves said and thought under so gross a dispensation. Sir William, still more worldly-minded than he was timid, was reduced to despair by the loss by which he was threatened. His son's haughtier spirit was exalted into rage at the idea of being deprived of his expected patrimony. But to Lady Ashton's yet more vindictive temper, the conduct of Ravenswood, or rather of his patron, appeared to be an offence challenging the deepest and most mortal revenge. Even the quiet and confiding temper of Lucy herself, swayed by the opinions expressed by all around her, could not but consider the conduct of Ravenswood as precipitate, and even unkind. "It was my father," she repeated with a sigh, "who welcomed him to this place, and encouraged, or at least allowed, the intimacy between us. Should he not have remembered this, and requited it with at least some moderate degree of procrastination in the assertion of his own alleged rights? I would have forfeited for him double the value of these lands, which he pursues with an ardor that shows he has forgotten how much I am implicated in the matter."

Lucy, however, could only murmur these things to herself, unwilling to increase the prejudices against her lover entertained by all around her, who exclaimed against the steps pursued on his account, as illegal, vexatious, and tyrannical, resembling the worst measures in the worst times of the worst Stuarts, and a degradation of Scotland, the decisions of whose learned judges were thus subjected to the review of a court, composed, indeed, of men of the highest rank, but who were not trained to the study of any municipal law, and might be supposed specially to hold in contempt that of Scotland. As a

natura. consequence of the alleged injustice meditated toward her father, every means was resorted to, and every argument urged, to induce Miss Ashton to break off her engagement with Ravenswood, as being scandalous, shameful, and sinful, formed with the mortal enemy of her family, and calculated to add bitterness to the distress of her parents.

Lucy's spirit, however, was high; and although unaided and alone, she could have borne much—she could have endured the repinings of her father—his murmurs against what he called the tyrannical usage of the ruling party—his ceaseless charges of ingratitude against Ravenswood—his endless lectures on the various means by which contracts may be voided and annulled—his quotations from the civil, the municipal, and the canon law—and his prelections upon the *patria potestas*.

She might have borne also in patience, or repelled with scorn, the bitter taunts and occasional violence of her brother, Colonel Douglas Ashton, and the impertinent and intrusive interference of other friends and relations. But it was beyond her power effectually to withstand or elude the constant and unceasing persecution of Lady Ashton, who, laying every other wish aside, had bent the whole efforts of her powerful mind to break her daughter's contract with Ravenswood, and to place a perpetual bar between the lovers, by effecting Lucy's union with Bucklaw. Far more deeply skilled than her husband in the recesses of the human heart, she was aware, that in this way she might strike a blow of deep and decisive vengeance upon one whom she esteemed as her mortal enemy; nor did she hesitate at raising her arm, although she knew that the wound must be dealt through the bosom of her daughter. With this stern and fixed purpose, she sounded every deep and shallow of her daughter's soul, assumed alternately every disguise of manner which could serve her object, and prepared at leisure every species of dire machinery by which the human mind can be wrenched from its settled determination. Some of these were of an obvious description, and require only to be cursorily mentioned; others were characteristic of the time, the country, and the persons engaged in this singular drama.

It was of the last consequence that all intercourse betwixt the lovers should be stopped, and by dint of gold and authority, Lady Ashton contrived to possess herself of such a complete command of all who were placed around her daughter, that, in fact, no leaguered fortress was ever more completely blockaded; while, at the same time, to all outward appearance, Miss Ashton lay under no restriction. The verge of her parents' domains became, in respect to her, like the viewless and en-

chanted line drawn around a fairy castle, where nothing unpermitted can either enter from without, or escape from within. Thus every letter, in which Ravenswood conveyed to Lucy Ashton the indispensable reasons which detained him abroad, and more than one note which poor Lucy had addressed to to him through what she thought a secure channel, fell into the hands of her mother. It could not be but that the tenor of these intercepted letters, especially those of Ravenswood, should contain something to irritate the passions, and fortify the obstinacy, of her into whose hands they fell; but Lady Ashton's passions were too deep-rooted to require this fresh food. She burnt the papers as regularly as she perused them; and as they consumed into vapor and tinder, regarded them with a smile upon her compressed lips, and an exultation in her steady eye, which showed her confidence that the hopes of the writers should soon be rendered equally unsubstantial.

It usually happens that fortune aids the machinations of those who are prompt to avail themselves of every chance that offers. A report was wafted from the Continent, founded, like others, of the same sort, upon many plausible circumstances, but without any real basis, stating the Master of Ravenswood to be on the eve of marriage with a foreign lady of fortune and distinction. This was greedily caught up by both the political parties, who were at once struggling for power and for popular favor, and who seized, as usual, upon the most private circumstances in the lives of each other's partisans, to convert them into subjects of political discussion.

The Marquis of A—— gave his opinion aloud and publicly, not indeed in the coarse terms ascribed to him by Captain Craigengelt, but in a manner sufficiently offensive to the Ashtons:—"He thought the report," he said, "highly probable, and heartily wished it might be true. Such a match was fitter and far more creditable for a spirited young fellow, than a marriage with the daughter of an old Whig lawyer, whose chicanery had so nearly ruined his father."

The other party, of course, laying out of view the opposition which the Master of Ravenswood received from Miss Ashton's family, cried shame upon his fickleness and perfidy, as if he had seduced the young lady into an engagement, and wilfully and causelessly abandoned her for another.

Sufficient care was taken that this report should find its way to Ravenswood Castle through every various channel, Lady Ashton being well aware, that the very reiteration of the same rumor from so many quarters could not but give it a semblance of truth. By some it was told as a piece of ordinary

news, by some communicated as serious intelligence ; now it was whispered to Lucy Ashton's ear in the tone of malignant pleasantry, and now transmitted to her as a matter of grave and serious warning.

Even the boy Henry was made the instrument of adding to his sister's torments. One morning he rushed into the room with a willow branch in his hand, which he told her had arrived that instant from Germany for her special wearing. Lucy, as we have seen, was remarkably fond of her younger brother, and at that moment his wanton and thoughtless unkindness seemed more keenly injurious than even the studied insults of her elder brother. Her grief, however, had no shade of resentment ; she folded her arms about the boy's neck, and saying, faintly, " Poor Henry ! you speak but what they tell you," she burst into a flood of unrestrained tears. The boy was moved notwithstanding the thoughtlessness of his age and character. " The devil take me," said he, " Lucy, if I fetch you any more of these tormenting messages again ; for I like you better," said he, kissing away the tears, " than the whole pack of them ; and you shall have my gray pony to ride on, and you shall canter him if you like,—ay, and ride beyond the village, too, if you have a mind."

" Who told you," said Lucy, " that I am not permitted to ride where I please ? "

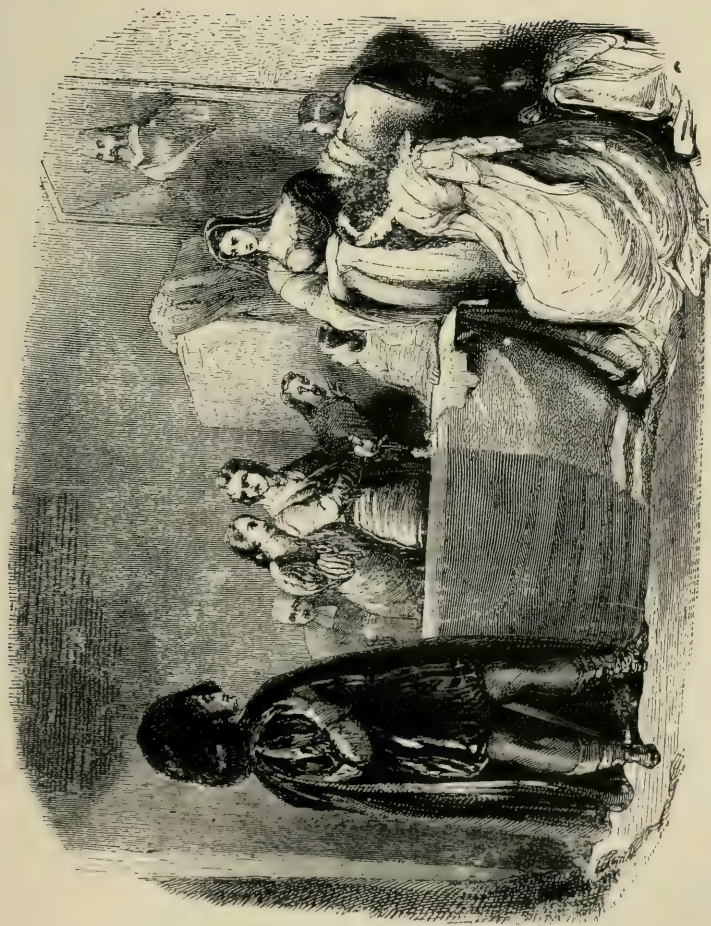
" That's a secret," said the boy ; " but you will find you can never ride beyond the village but your horse will cast a shoe, or fall lame, or the castle bell will ring, or something will happen to bring you back.—But if I tell you more of these things, Douglas will not get me the pair of colors they have promised me, and so good-morrow to you."

This dialogue plunged Lucy in still deeper dejection, as it tended to show her plainly, what she had for some time suspected, that she was little better than a prisoner at large in her father's house. We have described her in the outset of our story as of a romantic disposition, delighting in tales of love and wonder, and readily identifying herself with the situation of those legendary heroines, with whose adventures, for want of better reading, her memory had become stocked. The fairy wand, with which in her solitude she had delighted to raise visions of enchantment, became now the rod of a magician, the bond slave of evil genii, serving only to invoke spectres at which the exorcist trembled. She felt herself the object of suspicion, of scorn, of dislike at least, if not of hatred, to her own family ; and it seemed to her that she was abandoned by the very person on whose account she was exposed to the

enmity of all around her. Indeed, the evidence of Ravenswood's infidelity began to assume every day a more determined character.

A soldier of fortune, of the name of Westenho, an old familiar of Craigengelt's, chanced to arrive from abroad about this time. The worthy Captain, though without any precise communication with Lady Ashton, always acted most regularly and sedulously in support of her plans, and easily prevailed upon his friend, by dint of exaggeration of real circumstances, and coining of others, to give explicit testimony to the truth of Ravenswood's approaching marriage.

Thus beset on all hands, and in a manner reduced to despair, Lucy's temper gave way under the pressure of constant affliction and persecution. She became gloomy and abstracted, and contrary to her natural and ordinary habit of mind, sometimes turned with spirit, and even fierceness, on those by whom she was long and closely annoyed. Her health also began to be shaken, and her hectic cheek and wandering eye gave symptoms of what is called a fever upon the spirits. In most mothers this would have moved compassion ; but Lady Ashton, compact and firm of purpose, saw these waverings of health and intellect with no greater sympathy than that with which the hostile engineer regards the towers of a beleagured city as they reel under the discharge of his artillery ; or rather, she considered these starts and inequalities of temper as symptoms of Lucy's expiring resolution ; as the angler, by the throes and convulsive exertions of the fish which he has hooked, becomes aware that he soon will be able to land him. To accelerate the catastrophe in the present case, Lady Ashton had recourse to an expedient very consistent with the temper and credulity of those times, but which the reader will probably pronounce truly detestable and diabolical.



THE TOKEN SCENE.

CHAPTER THIRTIETH.

* * * * *

In which a witch did dwell, in loathly weeds,
And wilful want, all careless of her needs ;
So choosing solitary to abide,
Far from all neighbors, that her devilish deeds
And hellish arts from people she might hide,
And hurt far off, unknown, whome'er she envied.

FAIRY QUEEN.

THE health of Lucy Ashton soon required the assistance of a person more skilful in the office of a sick-nurse than the female domestics of the family. Ailsie Gourlay, sometimes called the Wise Woman of Bowden, was the person whom, for her own strong reasons, Lady Ashton selected as an attendant upon her daughter.

This woman had acquired a considerable reputation among the ignorant by the pretended cures which she performed, especially in *oncomes*, as the Scotch call them, or mysterious diseases, which baffle the regular physician. Her pharmacopœia consisted partly of herbs selected in planetary hours, partly of words, signs, and charms, which sometimes, perhaps, produced a favorable influence upon the imagination of her patients. Such was the avowed profession of Lucky Gourlay, which, as may well be supposed, was looked upon with a suspicious eye, not only by her neighbors, but even by the clergy of the district. In private, however, she traded more deeply in the occult sciences ; for, notwithstanding the dreadful punishments inflicted upon the supposed crime of witchcraft, there wanted not those who, steeled by want and bitterness of spirit, were willing to adopt the hateful and dangerous character for the sake of the influence which its terrors enabled them to exercise in the vicinity, and the wretched emolument which they could extract by the practice of their supposed art.

Ailsie Gourlay was not indeed fool enough to acknowledge a compact with the Evil One, which would have been a swift and ready road to the stake and tar-barrel. Her fairy, she said, like Caliban's, was a harmless fairy. Nevertheless, she "spaed fortunes," read dreams, composed philters, discovered stolen goods, and made and dissolved matches as successfully as if, according to the belief of the whole neighborhood, she had been

aided in those arts by Beelzebub himself. The worst of the pretenders to these sciences was, that they were generally persons who, feeling themselves odious to humanity, were careless of what they did to deserve the public hatred. Real crimes were often committed under pretence of magical imposture; and it somewhat relieves the disgust with which we read, in the criminal records, the conviction of these wretches, to be aware that many of them merited, as poisoners, suborners, and diabolical agents in secret domestic crimes, the severe fate to which they were condemned for the imaginary guilt of witchcraft.

Such was Ailsie Gourlay, whom, in order to attain the absolute subjugation of Lucy Ashton's mind, her mother thought it fitting to place near her person. A woman of less consequence than Lady Ashton had not dared to take such a step; but her high rank and strength of character set her above the censure of the world, and she was allowed to have selected for her daughter's attendant the best and most experienced sick-nurse "and mediciner" in the neighborhood, where an inferior person would have fallen under the reproach of calling in the assistance of a partner and ally of the great Enemy of Mankind.

The beldam caught her cue readily and by innuendo, without giving Lady Ashton the pain of distinct explanation. She was in many respects qualified for the part she played, which indeed could not be efficiently assumed without some knowledge of the human heart and passions. Dame Gourlay perceived that Lucy shuddered at her external appearance, which we have already described when we found her in the death-chamber of blind Alice; and while internally she hated the poor girl for the involuntary horror with which she saw she was regarded, she commenced her operations by endeavoring to efface or overcome those prejudices which, in her heart, she resented as mortal offences. This was easily done, for the hag's external ugliness was soon balanced by a show of kindness and interest, to which Lucy had of late been little accustomed; her attentive services and real skill gained her the ear, if not the confidence, of her patient; and under pretence of diverting the solitude of a sick room, soon led her attention captive by the legends in which she was well skilled, and to which Lucy's habits of reading and reflection induced her to "lend an attentive ear." Dame Gourlay's tales were at first of a mild and interesting character—

Of fays that nightly dance upon the wold,
And lovers doom'd to wander and to weep,
And castles high, where wicked wizards keep
Their captive thralls.

Gradually, however, they assumed a darker and more mysterious character, and became such as, told by the midnight lamp, and enforced by the tremulous tone, the quivering and livid lip, the uplifted skinny fore-finger, and the shaking head of the blue-eyed hag, might have appalled a less credulous imagination, in an age more hard of belief. The old Sycorax saw her advantage, and gradually narrowed her magic circle around the devoted victim on whose spirit she practised. Her legends began to relate to the fortunes of the Ravenswood family, whose ancient grandeur and portentous authority, credulity had graced with so many superstitious attributes. The story of the fatal fountain was narrated at full length, and with formidable additions, by the ancient sibyl. The prophecy, quoted by Caleb, concerning the dead bride, who was to be won by the last of the Ravenswoods, had its own mysterious commentary; and the singular circumstance of the apparition, seen by the Master of Ravenswood in the forest, having partly transpired through his hasty inquiries in the cottage of old Alice, formed a theme for many exaggerations.

Lucy might have despised these tales, if they had been related concerning another family, or if her own situation had been less despondent. But circumstanced as she was, the idea that an evil fate hung over her attachment became predominant over her other feelings; and the gloom of superstition darkened a mind, already sufficiently weakened by sorrow, distress, uncertainty, and an oppressive sense of desertion and desolation. Stories were told by her attendant so closely resembling her own in their circumstances, that she was gradually led to converse upon such tragic and mystical subjects with the beldam, and to repose a sort of confidence in the sibyl, whom she still regarded with involuntary shuddering. Dame Gourly knew how to avail herself of this imperfect confidence. She directed Lucy's thoughts to the means of inquiring into futurity,—the surest mode, perhaps, of shaking the understanding and destroying the spirits. Omens were expounded, dreams were interpreted, and other tricks of jugglery perhaps resorted to, by which the pretended adepts of the period deceived and fascinated their deluded followers. I find it mentioned in the articles of dittay against Ailsie Gourlay—(for it is some comfort to know that the old hag was tried, condemned, and burned on the top of North Berwick Law, by sentence of a commission from the Privy Council),—I find, I say, it was charged against her, among other offences, that she had, by the aid and delusions of Satan, shown to a young person of quality, in a mirror glass, a gentleman then abroad, to whom the said young person

was betrothed, and who appeared in the vision to be in the act of bestowing his hand upon another lady. But this and some other parts of the record appear to have been studiously left imperfect in names and dates, probably out of regard to the honor of the families concerned. If Dame Gourlay was able actually to play off such a piece of jugglery, it is clear she must have had better assistance to practise the deception, than her own skill or funds could supply. Meanwhile, this mysterious visionary traffic had its usual effect, in unsettling Miss Ashton's mind. Her temper became unequal, her health decayed daily, her manners grew moping, melancholy, and uncertain. Her father, guessing partly at the cause of these appearances, and exerting a degree of authority unusual with him, made a point of banishing Dame Gourlay from the castle; but the arrow was shot, and was rankling barb-deep in the side of the wounded deer.

It was shortly after the departure of this woman, that Lucy Ashton, urged by her parents, announced to them, with a vivacity by which they were startled, "that she was conscious heaven and earth and hell had set themselves against her union with Ravenswood; still her contract," she said, "was a binding contract, and she neither would nor could resign it without the consent of Ravenswood. Let me be assured," she concluded, "that he will free me from my engagement, and dispose of me as you please, I care not how. When the diamonds are gone, what signifies the casket?"

The tone of obstinacy with which this was said, her eyes flashing with unnatural light, and her hands firmly clinched, precluded the possibility of dispute; and the utmost length which Lady Ashton's art could attain, only got her the privilege of dictating the letter, by which her daughter required to know of Ravenswood whether he intended to abide by, or to surrender, what she termed, "their unfortunate engagement." Of this advantage Lady Ashton so far and so ingeniously availed herself, that according to the wording of the letter, the reader would have supposed Lucy was calling upon her lover to renounce a contract which was contrary to the interests and inclinations of both. Not trusting even to this point of deception, Lady Ashton finally determined to suppress the letter altogether, in hopes that Lucy's impatience would induce her to condemn Ravenswood unheard and in absence. In this she was disappointed. The time, indeed, had long elapsed when an answer should have been received from the Continent. The faint ray of hope which still glimmered in Lucy's mind was well nigh extinguished. But the idea never forsook her, that her

letter might not have been duly forwarded. One of her mother's new machinations unexpectedly furnished her with the means of ascertaining what she most desired to know.

The female agent of hell having been dismissed from the castle, Lady Ashton, who wrought by all variety of means, resolved to employ, for working the same end on Lucy's mind, an agent of a very different character. This was no other than the Reverend Mr. Bide-the-Bent, a Presbyterian clergyman, formerly mentioned, of the very strictest order, and the most rigid orthodoxy, whose aid she called in, upon the principle of the tyrant in the tragedy:—

“I'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,
And make it sin not to renounce that vow,
Which I'd have broken.”

But Lady Ashton was mistaken in the agent she had selected. His prejudices, indeed, were easily enlisted on her side, and it was no difficult matter to make him regard with horror the prospect of a union betwixt the daughter of a God-fearing, professing, and Presbyterian family of distinction, and the heir of a bloodthirsty prelatist and persecutor, the hands of whose fathers had been dyed to the wrists in the blood of God's saints. This resembled, in the divine's opinion, the union of a Moabitish stranger with the daughter of Zion. But with all the more severe prejudices and principles of his sect, Bide-the-Bent possessed a sound judgment, and had learned sympathy even in that very school of persecution, where the heart is so frequently hardened. In a private interview with Miss Ashton, he was deeply moved by her distress, and could not but admit the justice of her request to be permitted a direct communication with Ravenswood, upon the subject of their solemn contract. When she urged to him the great uncertainty under which she labored, whether her letter had been ever forwarded, the old man paced the room with long steps, shook his gray head, rested repeatedly for a space on his ivory-headed staff, and, after much hesitation, confessed that he thought her doubts so reasonable, that he would himself aid in the removal of them.

“I cannot but opine, Miss Lucy,” he said, “that your worshipful lady mother hath in this matter an eagerness, whilk, although it ariseth doubtless from love to your best interests here and hereafter,—for the man is of persecuting blood, and himself a persecutor, a cavalier or malignant, and a scoffer, who bath no inheritance in Jesse—nevertheless, we are commanded to do justice unto all, and to fulfil our bond and covenant, as well to the stranger, as to him who is in brotherhood with us,

Wherefore myself, even I myself, will be aiding unto the delivery of your letter to the man Edgar Ravenswood, trusting that the issue thereof may be your deliverance from the nets in which he hath sinfully engaged you. And that I may do in this neither more nor less than hath been warranted by your honorable parents, I pray you to transcribe, without increment or subtraction, the letter formerly expedited under the dictation of your right honorable mother ; and I shall put it into such sure course of being delivered, that if, honored young madam, you shall receive no answer, it will be necessary that you conclude that the man meaneth in silence to abandon that naughty contract, which, peradventure, he may be unwilling directly to restore."

Lucy eagerly embraced the expedient of the worthy divine. A new letter was written in the precise terms of the former, and consigned by Mr. Bide-the-Bent to the charge of Saunders Moonshine, a zealous elder of the church when on shore, and when on board his brig, as bold a smuggler as ever ran out a sliding bowsprit to the winds that blow betwixt Campvere and the east coast of Scotland. At the recommendation of his pastor, Saunders readily undertook that the letter should be securely conveyed to the Master of Ravenswood at the court where he now resided.

This retrospect became necessary to explain the conference betwixt Miss Ashton, her mother, and Bucklaw, which we have detailed in a preceding chapter.

Lucy was now like the sailor, who, while drifting through a tempestuous ocean, clings for safety to a single plank, his powers of grasping it becoming every moment more feeble, and the deep darkness of the night only checkered by the flashes of lightning, hissing as they show the white tops of the billows, in which he is soon to be engulfed.

Week crept away after week, and day after day. St. Jude's day arrived, the last and protracted term to which Lucy had limited herself, and there was neither letter nor news of Ravenswood.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIRST.

How fair these names, how much unlike they look
To all the blurr'd, subscriptions in my book !
The bridegroom's letters stand in row above,
Tapering, yet straight, like pine-trees in his grove ;
While free and fine the bride's appear below,
As light and slender as her jessamines grow.

CRABBE.

ST. JUDE's day came, the term assigned by Lucy herself as the furthest date of expectation, and, as we have already said, there were neither letters from, nor news of, Ravenswood. But there were news of Bucklaw and of his trusty associate Craigengelt, who arrived early in the morning for the completion of the proposed espousals, and for signing the necessary deeds.

These had been carefully prepared under the revisal of Sir William Ashton himself, it having been resolved, on account of the state of Miss Ashton's health, as it was said, that none save the parties immediately interested should be present when the parchments were subscribed. It was further determined, that the marriage should be solemnized upon the fourth day after signing the articles, a measure adopted by Lady Ashton, in order that Lucy might have as little time as possible to recede, or relapse into intractability. There was no appearance, however, of her doing either. She heard the proposed arrangement with the calm indifference of despair, or rather with an apathy arising from the oppressed and stupefied state of her feelings. To an eye so unobserving as that of Bucklaw, her demeanor had little more of reluctance than might suit the character of a bashful young lady, who, however, he could not disguise from himself, was complying with the choice of her friends, rather than exercising any personal predilection in his favor.

When the morning compliments of the bridegroom had been paid, Miss Ashton was left for some time to herself ; her mother remarking that the deeds must be signed before the hour of noon, in order that the marriage might be happy.

Lucy suffered herself to be attired for the occasion as the taste of her attendants suggested, and was of course splendidly arrayed. Her dress was composed of white satin and Brussels lace, and her hair arranged with a profusion of jewels, whose

lustre made a strange contrast to the deadly paleness of her complexion, and to the trouble which dwelt in her unsettled eye.

Her toilette was hardly finished, ere Henry appeared to conduct the passive bride to the state apartment, where all was prepared for signing the contract. "Do you know, sister," he said, "I am glad you are to have Bucklaw after all, instead of Ravenswood, who looked like a Spanish grandee come to cut our throats, and trample our bodies under foot.—And I am glad the broad seas are between us this day, for I shall never forget how frightened I was when I took him for the picture of old Sir Malise walked out of the canvas. Tell me true, are you not glad to be fairly shot of him?"

"Ask me no questions, dear Henry," said his unfortunate sister; "there is little more can happen to make me either glad or sorry in this world."

"And that's what all young brides say," said Henry, "and so do not be cast down, Lucy, for you'll tell another tale a twelvemonth hence—and I am to be bride's-man, and ride before you to the kirk, and all our kith, kin, and allies, and all Bucklaws are to be mounted and in order—and I am to have a scarlet laced coat, and a feathered hat, and a sword-belt, double bordered with gold and *point d'Espagne*, and a dagger instead of a sword; and I should like a sword much better, but my father won't hear of it. All my things, and a hundred besides, are to come out from Edinburgh to-night with old Gilbert, and the sumpter mules—and I will bring them, and show them to you the instant they come."

The boy's chatter was here interrupted by the arrival of Lady Ashton, somewhat alarmed at her daughter's stay. With one of her sweetest smiles, she took Lucy's arm under her own, and led her to the apartment where her presence was expected.

There were only present, Sir William Ashton and Colonel Douglas Ashton, the last in full regimentals—Bucklaw, in bridegroom trim—Craigengelt, freshly equipped from top to toe, by the bounty of his patron, and bedizened with as much lace as might have become the dress of the Copper Captain—together with the Rev. Mr. Bide-the-Bent; the presence of a minister being, in strict Presbyterian families, an indispensable requisite upon all occasions of unusual solemnity.

Wines and refreshments were placed on a table, on which the writings were displayed, ready for signature.

But before proceeding either to business or refreshments, Mr. Bide-the-Bent, at a signal from Sir William Ashton, invited the company to join him in a short extemporary prayer, in which he implored a blessing upon the contract now to be solemnized

between the honorable parties then present. With the simplicity of his times and profession, which permitted strong personal allusions, he petitioned, that the wounded mind of one of these noble parties might be healed, in reward of her compliance with the advice of her right honorable parents; and that, as she had proved herself a child after God's commandment, by honoring her father and mother, she and hers might enjoy the promised blessing—length of days in the land here, and a happy portion hereafter in a better country. He prayed further, that the bridegroom might be weaned from those follies which seduce youth from the path of knowledge; that he might cease to take delight in vain and unprofitable company, scoffers, rioters, and those who sit late at the wine (here Bucklaw winked to Craigengelt), and cease from the society that causeth to err. A suitable supplication in behalf of Sir William and Lady Ashton, and their family, concluded this religious address, which thus embraced every individual present, excepting Craigengelt, whom the worthy divine probably considered as past all hopes of grace.

The business of the day now went forward; Sir William Ashton signed the contract with legal solemnity and precision; his son, with military *nonchalance*; and Bucklaw, having subscribed as rapidly as Craigengelt could manage to turn the leaves, concluded by wiping his pen on that worthy's new laced cravat.

It was now Miss Ashton's turn to sign the writings, and she was guided by her watchful mother to the table for that purpose. At her first attempt she began to write with a dry pen, and when the circumstance was pointed out, seemed unable, after several attempts, to dip it in the massive silver inkstandish, which stood full before her. Lady Ashton's vigilance hastened to supply the deficiency.

I have myself seen the fatal deed, and in the distinct characters in which the name of Lucy Ashton is traced on each page, there is only a very slight tremulous irregularity, indicative of her state of mind at the time of the subscription. But the last signature is incomplete, defaced, and blotted; for while her hand was employed in tracing it, the hasty tramp of a horse was heard at the gate, succeeded by a step in the outer gallery, and a voice, which, in a commanding tone, bore down the opposition of the menials. The pen dropped from Lucy's fingers, as she exclaimed with a faint shriek—"He is come—He is come!"

CHAPTER THIRTY-SECOND.

This by his tongue should be a Montague !
Fetch me my rapier, boy ;
Now, by the faith and honor of my kin,
So strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

HARDLY had Miss Ashton dropped the pen, when the door of the apartment flew open, and the Master of Ravenswood entered the apartment.

Lockhard and another domestic, who had in vain attempted to oppose his passage through the gallery or antechamber, were seen standing on the threshold transfixed with surprise, which was instantly communicated to the whole party in the state-room. That of Colonel Douglas Ashton was mingled with resentment ; that of Bucklaw, with haughty and affected indifference ; the rest, even Lady Ashton herself, showed signs of fear, and Lucy seemed stiffened to stone by this unexpected apparition. Apparition it might well be termed, for Ravenswood had more the appearance of one returned from the dead, than of a living visitor.

He planted himself full in the middle of the apartment, opposite to the table at which Lucy was seated, on whom, as if she had been alone in the chamber, he bent his eyes with a mingled expression of deep grief and deliberate indignation. His dark-colored riding cloak, displaced from one shoulder, hung around one side of his person in the ample folds of the Spanish mantle. The rest of his rich dress was travel-soil'd, and deranged by hard riding. He had a sword by his side, and pistols in his belt. His slouched hat, which he had not removed at entrance, gave an additional gloom to his dark features, which, wasted by sorrow, and marked by the ghastly look communicated by long illness, added to a countenance naturally somewhat stern and wild a fierce and even savage expression. The matted and disheveled locks of hair which escaped from under his hat, together with his fixed and unmoved posture, made his head more resemble that of a marble bust than that of a living man. He said not a single word, and there was a deep silence in the company for more than two minutes.

It was broken by Lady Ashton, who in that space partly re-

covered her natural audacity. She demanded to know the cause of this unauthorized intrusion.

"That is a question, madam," said her son, "which I have the best right to ask—and I must request the Master of Ravenswood to follow me, where he can answer it at leisure."

Bucklaw interposed, saying, "No man on earth should usurp his previous right in demanding an explanation from the Master.—Craigengelt," he added, in an undertone, "d—n ye, why do you stand staring as if ye saw a ghost? fetch me my sword from the gallery."

"I will relinquish to none," said Colonel Ashton, "my right of calling to account the man who has offered this unparalleled affront to my family."

"Be patient, gentlemen," said Ravenswood, turning sternly toward them, and waving his hand as if to impose silence on their altercation. "If you are as weary of your lives as I am, I will find time and place to pledge mine against one or both; at present, I have no leisure for the disputes of triflers."

"Triflers!" echoed Colonel Ashton, half unsheathing his sword, while Bucklaw laid his hand on the hilt of that which Craigengelt had just reached him.

Sir William Ashton, alarmed for his son's safety, rushed between the young men and Ravenswood, exclaiming, "My son, I command you—Bucklaw, I entreat you—keep the peace in the name of the Queen and of the law!"

"In the name of the law of God," said Bide-the-Bent, advancing also with uplifted hands between Bucklaw, the Colonel and the object of their resentment—"In the name of him who brought peace on earth, and good-will to mankind, I implore—I beseech—I command you to forbear violence toward each other! God hateth the bloodthirsty man—he who striketh with the sword, shall perish with the sword."

"Do you take me for a dog, sir," said Colonel Ashton, turning fiercely upon him, "or something more brutally stupid, to endure this insult in my father's house?—Let me go, Bucklaw! He shall account to me, or, by Heaven, I will stab him where he stands!"

"You shall not touch him here," said Bucklaw; "he once gave me my life, and were he the devil come to fly away with the whole house and generation, he shall have nothing but fair play."

The passions of the two young men, thus counteracting each other, gave Ravenswood leisure to exclaim, in a stern and steady voice, "Silence!—let him who really seeks danger, take the fitting time when it is to be found; my mission here will be

shortly accomplished.—Is *that* your handwriting, madam?" he added in a softer tone, extending toward Miss Ashton her last letter.

A faltering "Yes," seemed rather to escape from her lips, than to be uttered as a voluntary answer.

"And is *this* also your handwriting?" extending toward her the mutual engagement.

Lucy remained silent. Terror, and yet a stronger and more confused feeling, so utterly disturbed her understanding, that she probably scarcely comprehended the question that was put to her.

"If you design," said Sir William Ashton, "to found any legal claim on that paper, sir, do not expect to receive any answer to an extrajudicial question."

"Sir William Ashton," said Ravenswood, "I pray you, and all who hear me, that you will not mistake my purpose. If this young lady of her own free will, desires the restoration of this contract, as the letter would seem to imply—there is not a withered leaf which this autumn wind strews on the heath, that is more valueless in my eyes. But I must and will hear the truth from her own mouth—without this satisfaction I will not leave this spot. Murder me by numbers you possibly may; but I am an armed man—I am a desperate man—and I will not die without ample vengeance. This is my resolution, take it as you may. I WILL hear her determination from her own mouth; from her own mouth, alone, and without witnesses will I hear it. Now, choose," he said, drawing his sword with the right hand, and, with the left, by the same motion taking a pistol from his belt and cocking it, but turning the point of one weapon, and the muzzle of the other, to the ground,—“Choose if you will have this hall floated with blood, or if you will grant me the decisive interview with my affianced bride, which the laws of God and the country alike entitle me to demand.”

All recoiled at the sound of his voice, and the determined action by which it was accompanied; for the ecstasy of real desperation seldom fails to overpower the less energetic passions by which it may be opposed. The clergyman was the first to speak. "In the name of God," he said, "receive an overture of peace from the meanest of his servants. What this honorable person demands, albeit it is urged with over violence, hath yet in it something of reason. Let him hear from Miss Lucy's own lips that she hath dutifully acceded to the will of her parents, and repenteth her of her covenant with him; and when he is assured of this he will depart in peace unto his own dwelling, and cumber us no more. Alas! the workings of the

ancient Adam are strong even in the regenerate—surely we should have long-suffering with those who, being yet in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, are swept forward by the uncontrolable current of worldly passion. Let, then, the Master of Ravenswood have the interview on which he insisteth; it can be but as a passing pang to this honorable maiden, since her faith is now irrevocably pledged to the choice of her parents. Let it, I say, be thus: it belongeth to my functions to entreat your honors' compliance with this healing overture."

"Never!" answered Lady Ashton, whose rage had now overcome her first surprise and terror—"never shall this man speak in private with my daughter, the affianced bride of another! Pass from this room who will, I remain here. I fear neither his violence nor his weapons, though some," she said, glancing a look toward Colonel Ashton, "who bear my name, appear more moved by them."

"For God's sake, madam," answered the worthy divine, "add not fuel to firebrands. The Master of Ravenswood cannot, I am sure, object to your presence, the young lady's state of health being considered, and your maternal duty. I myself will also tarry; peradventure my gray hairs may turn away wrath."

"You are welcome to do so, sir," said Ravenswood; "and Lady Ashton is also welcome to remain, if she shall think proper; but let all others depart."

"Ravenswood," said Colonel Ashton, crossing him as he went out, "you shall account for this ere long."

"When you please," replied Ravenswood.

"But I," said Bucklaw, with a half smile, "have a prior demand on your leisure, a claim of some standing."

"Arrange it as you will," said Ravenswood; "leave me but this day in peace, and I will have no dearer employment on earth, to-morrow, than to give you all the satisfaction you desire."

The other gentlemen left the apartment; but Sir William Ashton lingered.

"Master of Ravenswood," he said, in a conciliating tone, "I think I have not deserved that you should make this scandal and outrage in my family. If you will sheathe your sword, and retire with me into my study, I will prove to you, by the most satisfactory arguments, the inutility of your present irregular procedure"—

"To-morrow, sir—to-morrow—to-morrow I will hear you at length," reiterated Ravenswood, interrupting him; "this day hath its own sacred and indispensable business."

He pointed to the door, and Sir William left the apartment.

Ravenswood sheathed his sword, uncocked and returned his pistol to his belt, walked deliberately to the door of the apartment, which he bolted—returned, raised his hat from his forehead, and, gazing upon Lucy with eyes in which an expression of sorrow overcame their late fierceness, spread his disheveled locks back from his face, and said, “Do you know me, Miss Ashton?—I am still Edgar Ravenswood.” She was silent, and he went on with increasing vehemence—“I am still that Edgar Ravenswood, who, for your affection renounced the dear ties by which injured honor bound him to seek vengeance. I am that Ravenswood, who, for your sake, forgave, nay, clasped hands in friendship with the oppressor and pillager of his house—the traducer and murderer of his father.”

“My daughter,” answered Lady Ashton, interrupting him, “has no occasion to dispute the identity of your person; the venom of your present language is sufficient to remind her, that she speaks with the mortal enemy of her father.”

“I pray you to be patient, madam,” answered Ravenswood, “my answer must come from her own lips—Once more, Miss Lucy Ashton, I am that Ravenswood to whom you granted the solemn engagement, which you now desire to retract and cancel.”

Lucy’s bloodless lips could only falter out the words, “It was my mother.”

“She speaks truly,” said Lady Ashton, “it *was* I, who, authorized alike by the laws of God and man, advised her, and concurred with her, to set aside an unhappy and precipitate engagement, and to annul it by the authority of Scripture itself.”

“Scripture!” said Ravenswood, scornfully.

“Let him hear the text,” said Lady Ashton, appealing to the divine, “on which you yourself, with cautious reluctance, declared the nullity of the pretended engagement insisted upon by this violent man.”

The clergyman took his clasped Bible from his pocket, and read the following words: “*If a woman vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father’s house in her youth; and her father hear her vow, and her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her: then all her vows shall stand, every vow wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.*”

“And was it not even so with us?” interrupted Ravenswood.

“Control thy impatience, young man,” answered the divine, “and hear what follows in the sacred text;—*But if her father*

disallow her in the day that he heareth ; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand ; and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her."

"And was not, said Lady Ashton, fiercely and triumphantly breaking in,—“was not ours the case stated in the holy writ?—Will this person deny, that the instant her parents heard of the vow, or bond, by which our daughter had bound her soul, we disallowed the same in the most express terms, and informed him by writing of our determination?”

"And is this all?" said Ravenswood, looking at Lucy,—“are you willing to barter sworn faith, the exercise of free will, and the feelings of mutual affection, to this wretched hypocritical sophistry?”

"Hear him!" said Lady Ashton, looking to the clergyman—“hear the blasphemer!”

"May God forgive him," said Bide-the-Bent, “and enlighten his ignorance!”

"Hear what I have sacrificed for you," said Ravenswood, still addressing Lucy, “ere you sanction what has been done in your name. The honor of an ancient family, the urgent advice of my best friends, have been in vain used to sway my resolution; neither the arguments of reason, nor the portents of superstition have shaken my fidelity. The very dead have arisen to warn me, and their warning has been despised. Are you prepared to pierce my heart for its fidelity, with the very weapon which my rash confidence intrusted to your grasp?”

"Master of Ravenswood," said Lady Ashton, “you have asked what questions you thought fit. You see the total incapacity of my daughter to answer you. But I will reply for her and in a manner which you cannot dispute. You desire to know whether Lucy Ashton, of her own free will, desires to annul the engagement into which she has been trepanned. You have her letter under her own hand, demanding the surrender of it; and, in yet more full evidence of her purpose, here is the contract which she has this morning subscribed, in presence of this reverend gentleman, with Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw.”

Ravenswood gazed upon the deed, as if petrified. “And it was without fraud or compulsion,” said he, looking toward the clergyman, “that Miss Ashton subscribed this parchment?”

“I vouch it upon my sacred character.”

“This is indeed, madam, an undeniable piece of evidence,” said Ravenswood, sternly; “and it will be equally unnecessary and dishonorable to waste another word in useless remonstrance or reproach. There, madam,” he said, laying down before Lucy the signed paper and the broken piece of gold—“there are the

evidences of your first engagement ; may you be more faithful to that which you have just formed. I will trouble you to return the corresponding tokens of my ill-placed confidence—I ought rather to say of my egregious folly.”

Lucy returned the scornful glance of her lover with a gaze, from which perception seemed to have been banished ; yet she seemed partly to have understood his meaning, for she raised her hands as if to undo a blue ribbon which she wore around her neck. She was unable to accomplish her purpose, but Lady Ashton cut the ribbon asunder, and detached the broken piece of gold, which Miss Ashton had till then worn concealed in her bosom ; the written counterpart of the lover's engagement she for some time had had in her own possession. With a haughty courtesy she delivered both to Ravenswood, who was much softened when he took the piece of gold.

“And she could wear it thus,” he said—speaking to himself—“could wear it in her very bosom—could wear it next to her heart—even when—But complaint avails not,” he said, dashing from his eye the tear which had gathered in it, and resuming the stern composure of his manner. He strode to the chimney, and threw into the fire the paper and piece of gold, stamping upon the coals with the heel of his boot, as if to insure their destruction. “I will be no longer,” he then said, “an intruder here—Your evil wishes, and your worse offices, Lady Ashton, I will only return, by hoping these will be your last machinations against your daughter's honor and happiness.—And to you, madam,” he said, addressing Lucy, “I have nothing further to say, except to pray to God that you may not become a world's wonder for this act of wilful and deliberate perjury.”—Having uttered these words, he turned on his heel, and left the apartment.

Sir William Ashton, by entreaty and authority, had detained his son and Bucklaw in a distant part of the castle, in order to prevent their again meeting with Ravenswood ; but as the Master descended the great staircase, Lockhard delivered him a billet, signed Sholto Douglas Ashton, requesting to know where the Master of Ravenswood would be heard of four or five days from hence, as the writer had business of weight to settle with him, so soon as an important family event had taken place.

“Tell Colonel Ashton,” said Ravenswood, composedly, “I shall be found at Wolf's Crag when his leisure serves him.”

As he descended the outward stair which led from the terrace, he was interrupted a second time by Craigenfelt, who, on the part of his principal, the Laird of Bucklaw, expressed a hope, that Ravenswood would not leave Scotland within ten days at

least, as he had both former and recent civilities for which to express his gratitude.

"Tell your Master," said Ravenswood, fiercely, "to choose his own time. He will find me at Wolf's Crag, if his purpose is not forestalled."

"My master?" replied Craigenfelt, encouraged by seeing Colonel Ashton and Bucklaw at the bottom of the terrace; "give me leave to say, I know of no such person upon earth nor will I permit such language to be used to me!"

"Seek your master, then, in hell!" exclaimed Ravenswood, giving way to the passion he had hitherto restrained, and throwing Craigenfelt from him with such violence, that he rolled down the steps, and lay senseless at the foot of them.—"I am a fool," he instantly added, "to vent my passion upon a caitiff so worthless."

He then mounted his horse, which at his arrival he had secured to a balustrade in front of the castle, rode very slowly past Bucklaw and Colonel Ashton, raising his hat as he passed each, and looking in their faces steadily while he offered this mute salutation, which was returned by both with the same stern gravity. Ravenswood walked on with equal deliberation until he reached the head of the avenue, as if to show that he rather courted than avoided interruption. When he had passed the the upper gate, he turned his horse, and looked at the castle with a fixed eye; then set spurs to his good steed, and departed with the speed of a demon dismissed by the exorcist.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THIRD.

Who comes from the bridal chamber?
It is Azrael, the angel of death.

THALABA.

AFTER the dreadful scene that had taken place at the castle, Lucy was transported to her own chamber, where she remained for some time in a state of absolute stupor. Yet afterward, in the course of the ensuing day, she seemed to have recovered, not merely her spirits and resolution, but a sort of flighty levity, that was foreign to her character and situation, and which was at times checkered by fits of deep silence and melancholy, and of capricious pettishness. Lady Ashton became much alarmed and consulted the family physicians. But as her pulse indicated no change, they could only say that the disease was on

the spirits and, recommended gentle exercise and amusement, Miss Ashton never alluded to what had passed in the state-room. It seemed doubtful even if she was conscious of it, for she was often observed to raise her hands to her neck, as if in search of the ribbon that had been taken from it, and mutter in surprise and discontent, when she could not find it, "It was the link that bound me to life."

Notwithstanding all these remarkable symptoms, Lady Ashton was too deeply pledged to delay her daughter's marriage even in her present state of health. It cost her much trouble to keep up the fair side of appearances toward Bucklaw. She was well aware, that if he once saw any reluctance on her daughter's part, he would break off the treaty, to her great personal shame and dishonor. She therefore resolved, that, if Lucy continued passive, the marriage should take place upon the day that had been previously fixed, trusting that a change of place, of situation, and of character, would operate a more speedy and effectual cure upon the unsettled spirits of her daughter, than could be attained by the slow measures which the medical men recommended. Sir William Ashton's views of family aggrandizement, and his desire to strengthen himself against the measures of the Marquis of A——, readily induced him to acquiesce in what he could not have perhaps resisted if willing to do so. As for the young men, Bucklaw and Colonel Ashton, they protested, that after what had happened, it would be most dishonorable to postpone for a single hour the time appointed for the marriage, as it would be generally ascribed to their being intimidated by the intrusive visit and threats of Ravenswood.

Bucklaw would indeed have been incapable of such precipitation, had he been aware of the state of Miss Ashton's health, or rather of her mind. But custom, upon these occasions, permitted only brief and sparing intercourse between the bridegroom and the betrothed; a circumstance so well improved by Lady Ashton, that Bucklaw neither saw nor suspected the real state of the health and feelings of his unhappy bride.

On the eve of the bridal day, Lucy appeared to have one of her fits of levity, and surveyed with a degree of girlish interest, the various preparations of dress, etc. etc., which the different members of the family had prepared for the occasion.

The morning dawned bright and cheerily. The bridal guests assembled in gallant troops from distant quarters. Not only the relations of Sir William Ashton, and the still more dignified connections of his lady, together with the numerous kinsmen and allies of the bridegroom, were present upon this joyful cere-

mony, gallantly mounted, arrayed and caparisoned, but almost every Presbyterian family of distinction, within fifty miles, made a point of attendance upon an occasion which was considered as giving a sort of triumph over the Marquis of A——, in the person of his kinsman. Splendid refreshments awaited the guests on their arrival, and after these were finished, the cry was to horse. The bride was led forth betwixt her brother Henry and her mother. Her gayety of the preceding day had given rise to a deep shade of melancholy, which, however did not misbecome an occasion so momentous. There was a light in her eyes, and a color in her cheek, which had not been kindled for many a day, and which, joined to her great beauty, and the splendor of her dress, occasioned her entrance to be greeted with a universal murmur of applause, in which even the ladies could not refrain from joining. While the cavalcade were getting to horse, Sir William Ashton, a man of peace and of form, censured his son Henry for having begirt himself with a military sword of preposterous length, belonging to his brother, Colonel Ashton.

“If you must have a weapon,” he said, “upon such a peaceful occasion, why did you not use the short poniard sent from Edinburgh on purpose?”

The boy vindicated himself, by saying it was lost.

“You put it out of the way yourself, I suppose,” said his father, “out of ambition to wear that preposterous thing, which might have served Sir William Wallace—But never mind, get to horse now, and take care of your sister.”

The boy did so, and was placed in the centre of the gallant train. At the time, he was too full of his own appearance, his sword, his laced cloak, his feathered hat, and his managed horse, to pay much regard to anything else; but he afterward remembered to the hour of his death, that when the hand of his sister, by which she supported herself on the pillion behind him, touched his own, it felt as wet and cold as sepulchral marble.

Glancing wide over hill and dale, the fair bridal procession at last reached the parish church, which they nearly filled; for, besides domestics, above a hundred gentlemen and ladies were present upon the occasion. The marriage ceremony was performed according to the rites of the Presbyterian persuasion, to which Bucklaw of late had judged it proper to conform.

On the outside of the church a liberal dole was distributed to the poor of the neighboring parishes, under the direction of Johnny Mortsheugh, who had lately been promoted from his desolate quarters at the Hermitage, to fill the more eligible

situation of sexton at the parish church of Ravenswood. Dame Gourlay, with two of her contemporaries, the same who assisted at Alice's late-wake, seated apart upon a flat monument or *through-stane*, sate enviously comparing the shares which had been allotted to them in dividing the dole.

"Johnny Mortsheugh," said Annie Winnie, "might hae minded auld lang syne, and thought of his auld kimmers, for as braw as he is with his new black coat. I hae gotten but five herring instead o' sax, and this disna look like a gude sax-pennys, and I daresay this bit morsel o' beef is an unce lighter than ony that's been dealt round; and it's a bit o' the tenony hough, mair by token that yours, Maggie, is out o' the back sey."

"Mine, quo' she?" mumbled the paralytic hag, "mine is half banes, I trow. If grit folk gie poor bodies ony thing for coming to their weddings and burials, it suld be something that wad do them gude, I think."

"Their gifts," said Ailsie Gourlay, "are dealt for nae love of us—nor out of respect for whether we feed or starve. They wad gie us whinstanes for loaves, if it would serve their ain vanity, and yet they expect us to be as gratefu', as they ca' it, as if they served us for true love and liking."

"And that's truly said," answered her companion.

"But, Ailsie Gourlay, ye're the auldest o' us three, did ye ever see a mair grand bridal?"

"I winna say that I have," answered the hag; "but I think soon to see as braw a burial."

"And that wad please me as weel," said Annie Winnie; "for there's as large a dole, and folk are no obliged to grin and laugh, and mak murgeons, and wish joy to these hellicat quality, that lord it ower us like brute beasts. I like to pack the dead-dole in my lap, and rin ower my auld rhyme—

' My loaf in my lap, my penny in my purse,
Thou art ne'er the better, and I'm ne'er the worse.' " *

"That's right, Annie," said the paralytic woman; "God send us a green Yule and a fat kirkyard!"

"But I would like to ken, Lucky Gourlay, for ye're the auldest

* Reginald Scott tells of an old woman who performed so many cures by means of a charm, that she was suspected of witchcraft. Her mode of practice being inquired into, it was found, that the only fee which she would accept of, was a loaf of bread and a silver penny; and that the potent charm with which she wrought so many cures, was the doggerel couplet in the text. [See note to the Antiquary.]

and wisest among us, whilk o' these revelers' turns it will be to be streekit first?"

"D'ye see yon dandilly maiden," said Dame Gourlay, "a glistening wi' gowd and jewels, that they are lifting up on the white horse behind that harebrained callant in scarlet, wi' the lang sword at his side?"

"But that's the bride!" said her companion, her cold heart touched with some sort of compassion; "that's the very bride hersell! Eh, whow! sae young, sae braw, and sae bonny—and is her time sae short?"

"I tell ye," said the sibyl, "her winding sheet is up as high as her throat already, believe it wha list. Her sand has but few grains to rin out, and nae wonder—they've been weel shaken. The leaves are withering fast on the trees, but she'll never see the Martinmas wind gar them dance in swirls like the fairy rings."

"Ye waited on her for a quarter," said the paralytic woman, "and got twa red pieces, or I am far beguiled."

"Ay, ay," answered Ailsie, with a bitter grin; "and Sir William Ashton promised me a bonny red gown to the boot o' that—a stake, and a chain, and a tar barrel, lass!—what think ye o' that for a propine?—for being up early and doun late for fourscore nights and mair wi' his dwining daughter. But he may keep it for his ain ledly cummers."

"I hae heard a sough," said Annie Winnie, "as if Leddy Ashton was nae canny body."

"D'ye see her yonder," said Dame Gourlay, "as she prances on her gray gelding out at the kirkyard?—there's mair o' utter deevilry in that woman, as brave and fair-fashioned as she rides yonder, than in a' the Scotch witches that ever flew by moonlight ower North Berwick Law."

"What's that ye say about witches, ye damned hags!" said Johnny Mortsheugh; "are ye casting yer cantrips in the very kirkyard, to mischief the bride and bridegroom? Get awa hame, for if I tak my souple t'ye, I'll gar ye find the road faster than ye wad like."

"Hech, sirs!" answered Ailsie Gourlay: "how braw are we wi' our new black coat and our weel-pouthered head, as if we had never ken'd hunger nor thirst oursells! and we'll be screwing up our bit fiddle, doubtless, in the ha' the night, amang a' the other elbo'-jiggers for miles round. Let's see if the pins haud, Johnny—that's a' lad."

"I take ye a' to witness, gude people," said Mortsheugh, "that she threatens me wi' mischief, and forespeaks me. If only thing but gude happens to me or my fiddle this night, I'll make

it the blackest night's job she ever stirred in. I'll hae her before Presbytery and Synod—I'm half a minister mysell, now that I am a bedial in an inhabited parish."

Although the mutual hatred betwixt these hags and the rest of mankind had steeled their hearts against all impressions of festivity, this was by no means the case with the multitude at large.—The splendor of the bridal retinue—the gay dresses—the spirited horses—the blithesome appearance of the handsome women and gallant gentlemen assembled upon the occasion, had the usual effect upon the minds of the populace. The repeated shouts of "Ashton and Bucklaw forever!"—the discharge of pistols, guns, and musketoons, to give what was called the bridal-shot, evinced the interest the people took in the occasion of the cavalcade, as they accompanied it upon their return to the castle. If there was here and there an elder peasant or his wife who sneered at the pomp of the upstart family, and remembered the days of the long-descended Ravenswoods, even they, attracted by the plentiful cheer which the castle that day afforded to rich and poor, held their way thither, and acknowledged, notwithstanding their prejudices, the influence of *l'Amphitrion où l'on dine*.

Thus accompanied with the attendance both of rich and poor, Lucy returned to her father's house. Bucklaw used his privilege of riding next to the bride, but, new to such a situation, rather endeavored to attract attention by the display of his person and horsemanship, than by any attempt to address her in private. They reached the castle in safety, amid a thousand joyous acclamations.

It is well known, that the weddings of ancient days were celebrated with a festive publicity rejected by the delicacy of modern times. The marriage guests, on the present occasion, were regaled with a banquet of unbounded profusion, the relics of which, after the domestics had feasted in their turn, were distributed among the shouting crowd, with as many barrels of ale as made the hilarity without correspond to that within the castle. The gentlemen, according to the fashion of the times, indulged, for the most part, in deep draughts of the richest wines, while the ladies, prepared for the ball which always closed a bridal entertainment, impatiently expected their arrival in the state gallery. At length the social party broke up at a late hour, and the gentlemen crowded into the saloon, where, enlivened by wine and the joyful occasion, they laid aside their swords, and handed their impatient partners to the floor. The music already rung from the gallery, along the fretted roof of the ancient state apartment. According to strict etiquette, the

bride ought to have opened the ball, but Lady Ashton, making an apology on account of her daughter's health, offered her own hand to Bucklaw as substitute for her daughter's.

But as Lady Ashton raised her head gracefully, expecting the strain at which she was to begin the dance, she was so much struck by an unexpected alteration in the ornaments of the apartment, that she was surprised into an exclamation.—“Who has dared to change the pictures?”

All looked up, and those who knew the usual state of the apartment observed, with surprise, that the picture of Sir William Ashton's father was removed from its place, and in its stead that of old Sir Malise Ravenswood seemed to frown wrath and vengeance upon the party assembled below. The exchange must have been made while the apartments were empty, but had not been observed until the torches and lights in the sconces were kindled for the ball. The haughty and heated spirits of the gentlemen led them to demand an immediate inquiry into the cause of what they deemed an affront to their host and to themselves; but Lady Ashton, recovering herself, passed it over as the freak of a crazy wench who was maintained about the castle, and whose susceptible imagination had been observed to be much affected by the stories which Dame Gourlay delighted to tell concerning, “the former family,” so Lady Ashton named the Ravenswoods. The obnoxious picture was immediately removed, and the ball was opened by Lady Ashton, with a grace and dignity which supplied the charms of youth, and almost verified the extravagant encomiums of the elder part of the company, who extolled her performance as far exceeding the dancing of the rising generation.

When Lady Ashton sat down, she was not surprised to find that her daughter had left the apartment, and she herself followed, eager to obviate any impression which might have been made upon her nerves by an incident so likely to affect them as the mysterious transposition of the portraits. Apparently she found her apprehensions groundless, for she returned in about an hour, and whispered the bridegroom, who extricated himself from the dancers, and vanished from the apartment. The instruments now played their loudest strains—the dancers pursued their exercise with all the enthusiasm inspired by youth, mirth, and high spirits, when a cry was heard so shrill and piercing, as at once to arrest the dance and the music. All stood motionless; but when the yell was again repeated, Colonel Ashton snatched a torch from the sconce, and demanding the key of the bridal chamber from Henry, to whom, as bride's-man, it had been intrusted, rushed thither, followed by Sir William and

Lady Ashton, and one or two others, near relations of the family. The bridal guests waited their return in stupefied amazement.

Arrived at the door of the apartment, Colonel Ashton knocked and called, but received no answer except stifled groans. He hesitated no longer to open the door of the apartment, in which he found opposition from something which lay against it. When he has succeeded in opening it, the body of the bridegroom was found lying on the threshold of the bridal chamber, and all around was flooded with blood. A cry of surprise and horror was raised by all present ; and the company, excited by this new alarm, began to rush tumultuously toward the sleeping apartment. Colonel Ashton, first whispering to his mother,—“ Search for her—she has murdered him ! ” drew his sword, planted himself in the passage, and declared he would suffer no man to pass excepting the clergyman, and a medical person present. By their assistance, Bucklaw, who still breathed, was raised from the ground, and transported to another apartment, where his friends, full of suspicion and murmuring, assembled round him to learn the opinion of the surgeon.

In the meanwhile, Lady Ashton, her husband, and their assistants, in vain sought Lucy in the bridal bed and in the chamber. There was no private passage from the room, and they began to think that she must have thrown herself from the window, when one of the company, holding his torch lower than the rest, discovered something white in the corner of the great old fashioned chimney of the apartment. Here they found the unfortunate girl, seated, or rather couched like a hare upon its form—her head-gear disheveled ; her night-clothes torn and dabbled with blood,—her eyes glazed, and her features convulsed into a wild paroxysm of insanity. When she saw herself discovered, she gibbered, made mouths, and pointed at them with her bloody fingers, with the frantic gestures of an exulting demoniac.

Female assistance was now hastily summoned ; the unhappy bride was overpowered, not without the use of some force. As they carried her over the threshold, she looked down, and uttered the only articulate words that she had yet spoken, saying with a sort of grinning exultation, “ So, you have ta’er up your bonny bridegroom ? ” She was by the shuddering assistants conveyed to another and more retired apartment, where she was secured as her situation required, and closely watched. The unutterable agony of the parents—the horror and confusion of all who were in the castle—the fury of contending passions between the friends of the different parties,

passions augmented by previous intemperance, surpass description.

The surgeon was the first one to obtain something like a patient hearing; he pronounced that the wound of Bucklaw, though severe and dangerous, was by no means fatal, but might readily be rendered so by disturbance and hasty removal. This silenced the numerous party of Bucklaw's friends, who had previously insisted that he should, at all rates, be transported from the castle to the nearest of their houses. They still demanded, however, that, in consideration of what had happened, four of their number should remain to watch over the sick-bed of their friend, and that a suitable number of their domestics, well armed, should also remain in the castle. This condition being acceded to on the part of Colonel Ashton and his father, the rest of the bridegroom's friends left the castle, notwithstanding the hour and the darkness of the night. The cares of the medical man were next employed in behalf of Miss Ashton, whom he pronounced to be in a very dangerous state. Farther medical assistance was immediately summoned. All night she remained delirious. On the morning, she fell into a state of absolute insensibility. The next evening, the physicians said, would be the crisis of her malady. It proved so; for although she awoke from her trance with some appearance of calmness, and suffered her night-clothes to be changed, or put in order, yet so soon as she put her hand to her neck, as if to search for the fatal blue ribbon, a tide of recollections seemed to rush upon her, which her mind and body were alike incapable of bearing. Convulsion followed convulsion, till they closed in death, without her being able to utter a word explanatory of the fatal scene.

The provincial judge of the district arrived the day after the young lady had expired, and executed, though with all possible delicacy to the afflicted family, the painful duty of inquiring into this fatal transaction. But there occurred nothing to explain the general hypothesis, that the bride, in a sudden fit of insanity, had stabbed the bridegroom at the threshold of the apartment. The fatal weapon was found in the chamber, smeared with blood. It was the same poniard which Henry should have worn on the wedding-day, and which his unhappy sister had probably contrived to secrete on the preceding evening, when it had been shown to her among other articles of preparation for the wedding.

The friends of Bucklaw expected that on his recovery he would throw some light upon this dark story, and eagerly pressed him with inquiries, which for some time he evaded

under pretext of weakness. When, however, he had been transported to his own house, and was considered as in a state of convalescence, he assembled those persons, both male and female, who had considered themselves as entitled to press him on this subject, and returned them thanks for the interest they had exhibited in his behalf, and their offers of adherence and support. "I wish you all," he said, "my friends, to understand, however, that I have neither story to tell, nor injuries to avenge. If a lady shall question me henceforward upon the incidents of that unhappy night, I shall remain silent, and in future consider her as one who has shown herself desirous to break off her friendship with me ; in a word, I will never speak to her again. But if a gentleman shall ask me the same question, I shall regard the incivility as equivalent to an invitation to meet him in the Duke's Walk,* and I expect that he will rule himself accordingly."

A declaration so decisive admitted no commentary ; and it was soon after seen that Bucklaw had arisen from the bed of sickness a sadder and a wiser man than he had hitherto shown himself. He dismissed Craigenfelt from his society, but not without such provision as, if well employed, might secure him against indigence, and against temptation.

Bucklaw afterward went abroad and never returned to Scotland ; nor was he known ever to hint at the circumstances attending his fatal marriage. By many readers this may be deemed overstrained, romantic, and composed by the wild imagination of an author, desirous of gratifying the popular appetite for the horrible ; but those who are read in the private family history of Scotland during the period in which the scene is laid, will readily discover, through the disguise of borrowed names and added incidents, the leading particulars of AN OWER TRUE TALE.

* A walk in the vicinity of Holyrood House, so called, because often frequented by the Duke of York, afterward James II., during his residence in Scotland. It was for a long time the usual place of rendezvous for settling affairs of honor.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOURTH.

Whose mind's so marbled, and his heart so hard,
 That would not, when this huge mishap was heard,
 To th' utmost note of sorrow set their song,
 To see a gallant with so great a grace,
 So suddenly unthought on, so o'erthrown,
 And so to perish, in so poor a place,
 By too rash riding in a ground unknown !

POEM, IN NISBET'S HERALDRY, *Vol. II.*

WE have anticipated the course of time to mention Bucklaw's recovery and fate, that we might not interrupt the detail of events which succeeded the funeral of the unfortunate Lucy Ashton. This melancholy ceremony was performed in the misty dawn of an autumnal morning, with such moderate attendance and ceremony as could not possibly be dispensed with. A very few of the nearest relations attended her body to the same churchyard to which she had lately been led as a bride, with as little free will, perhaps, as could be now testified by her lifeless and passive remains. An aisle adjacent to the church had been fitted up by Sir William Ashton as a family cemetery ; and here, in a coffin bearing neither name nor date, were consigned to dust the remains of what was once lovely, beautiful, and innocent, though exasperated to frenzy by a long tract of unremitting persecution. While the mourners were busy in the vault, the three village hags, who, notwithstanding the unwonted earliness of the hour, had snuffed the carrion like vultures, were seated on the "through-stane," and engaged in their wonted unhallowed conference.

"Did not I say," said Dame Gourlay, "that the braw bridal would be followed by as braw a funeral?"

"I think," answered Dame Winnie, "there's little bravery at it ; neither meat nor drink, and just a wheen silver tippences to the poor folk ; it was little worth while to come sae far road for sae sma' profit, and us sae frail."

"Out, wretch !" replied Dame Gourlay, "can a' the dainties they could gie us be half sae sweet as this hour's vengeance ? There they are that were capering on their prancing nags four days since, and they are now ganging as dreigh and sober as oursell the day. They were a' glistening wi' gowd and silver—they're now as black as the crook. And Miss Lucy Ashton,

that grudged when an honest woman came near her, a taid may sit on her coffin the day, and she can never scunner when he croaks. And Lady Ashton has hell-fire burning in her breast by this time; and Sir William, wi' his gibbets, and his faggots, and his chains, how likes he the witcheries of his ain dwelling-house?"

"And is it true, then," murmured the paralytic wretch, "that the bride was trailed out of her bed and up the chimley by evil spirits, and that the bridegroom's face was wrung round ahint him?"

"Ye needna care wha did it, or how it was done," said Ailsie Gourlay; "but I'll uphaud it for nae stickit* job, and that the lairds and leddies ken weel this day."

"And was it true," said Annie Winnie, "sin ye ken sae muckle about it, that the picture of Auld Sir Malise Ravenswood came down on the ha' floor and led out the brawl before them a'?"

"Na," said Ailsie; "but into the ha' came the picture—and I ken weel how it came there—to gie them a warning that pride would get a fa'. But there's as queer a ploy, cummers, as ony o' thae, that's gaun on even now in the burial vault yonder—ye saw twall mourners, wi' crape and cloak, gang down the steps pair and pair?"

"What should ail us to see them?" said the one old woman.

"I counted them," said the other, with the eagerness of a person to whom the spectacle had afforded too much interest to be viewed with indifference.

"But ye did not see," said Ailsie, exulting in her superior observation, "that there's a thirteenth amang them that they ken naething about; and, if auld freits say true, there's ane o' that company that'll no be lang for this warld. But come awa, cummers; if we bide here, I'se warrant we get the wyte o' whatever ill comes of it, and that gude will come of it nane o' them need ever think to see."

And thus, croaking like the ravens when they anticipate pestilence, the ill-boding sibyls withdrew from the churchyard.

In fact, the mourners, when the service of interment was ended, discovered that there was among them one more than the invited number, and the remark was communicated in whispers to each other. The suspicion fell upon a figure, which, muffled in the same deep mourning with the others, was reclined, almost in a state of insensibility, against one of the pillars of the sepulchral vault. The relatives of the Ashton family were expressing in whispers their surprise and displeasure at the in-

* *Stickit*, imperfect.

trusion, when they were interrupted by Colonel Ashton, who, in his father's absence, acted as principal mourner. "I know," he said, in a whisper, "who this person is; he has, or shall soon have, as deep cause of mourning as ourselves—leave me to deal with him, and do not disturb the ceremony by unnecessary exposure." So saying, he separated himself from the group of his relations, and taking the unknown mourner by the cloak, he said to him, in a tone of suppressed emotion, "Follow me."

The stranger, as if starting from a trance at the sound of his voice, mechanically obeyed, and they ascended the broken ruinous stair which led from the sepulchre into the churchyard. The other mourners followed, but remained grouped together at the door of the vault, watching with anxiety the motions of Colonel Ashton and the stranger, who now appeared to be in close conference beneath the shade of a yew-tree, in the most remote part of the burial-ground.

To this sequestered spot Colonel Ashton had guided the stranger, and then turning round, addressed him in a stern and composed tone—"I cannot doubt that I speak to the Master of Ravenswood?" No answer was returned. "I cannot doubt," resumed the Colonel, trembling with rising passion, "that I speak to the murderer of my sister?"

"You have named me but too truly," said Ravenswood, in a hollow and tremulous voice.

"If you repent what you have done," said the Colonel, "may your penitence avail you before God; with me it shall serve you nothing. "Here," he said, giving a paper, "is the measure of my sword, and a memorandum of the time and place of meeting. Sun-rise to-morrow-morning, on the links to the east of Wolf's Hope."

The Master of Ravenswood held the paper in his hand, and seemed irresolute. At length he spoke—"Do not," he said, "urge to further desperation a wretch who is already desperate. Enjoy your life when you can, and let me seek my death from another."

"That you never, never shall!" said Douglas Ashton. "You shall die by my hand, or you shall complete the ruin of my family by taking my life. If you refuse my open challenge, there is no advantage I will not take of you, no indignity with which I will not load you, until the very name of Ravenswood shall be the sign of everything that is dishonorable, as it is already of all that is villanous."

"That it shall never be," said Ravenswood, fiercely; "if I am the last who must bear it, I owe it to those who once owned it, that the name shall be extinguished without infamy. I accept

your challenge, time, and place of meeting. We meet, I presume, alone?"

"Alone we meet," said Colonel Ashton, "and alone will the survivor of us return from that place of rendezvous."

"Then God have mercy on the soul of him who falls!" said Ravenswood.

"So be it!" said Colonel Ashton; "so far can my charity reach even for the man I hate most deadly, and with the deepest reason. Now, break off, for we shall be interrupted. The links by the sea-shore to the east of Wolf's Hope—the hour, sunrise—our swords our only weapons."

"Enough," said the Master; "I will not fail you."

They separated; Colonel Ashton joining the rest of the mourners, and the Master of Ravenswood taking his horse, which was tied to a tree behind the church. Colonel Ashton returned to the Castle with the funeral guests, but found a pretext for detaching himself from them in the evening, when, changing his dress to a riding habit, he rode to Wolf's Hope that night, and took up his abode in the little inn, in order that he might be ready for his rendezvous in the morning.

It is not known how the Master of Ravenswood disposed of the rest of that unhappy day. Late at night, however, he arrived at Wolf's Crag, and aroused his old domestic, Caleb Balderston, who had ceased to expect his return. Confused and flying rumors of the late tragical death of Miss Ashton, and of its mysterious cause, had already reached the old man, who was filled with the utmost anxiety, on account of the probable effect these events might produce upon the mind of his master.

The conduct of Ravenswood did not alleviate his apprehensions. To the butler's trembling entreaties, that he would take some refreshment, he at first returned no answer, and then suddenly and fiercely demanding wine, he drank, contrary to his habits, a very large draught. Seeing that his master would eat nothing, the old man affectionately entreated that he would permit him to light him to his chamber. It was not until the request was three or four times repeated, that Ravenswood made a mute sign of compliance. But when Balderston conducted him to an apartment which had been comfortably fitted up, and which, since his return he had usually occupied, Ravenswood stopped short on the threshold.

"Not here," said he, sternly; "show me the room in which my father died; the room in which SHE slept the night they were at the castle."

"Who, sir?" said Caleb, too terrified to preserve his presence of mind.

"*She*, Lucy Ashton!—would you kill me, old man, by forcing me to repeat her name?"

Caleb would have said something of the disrepair of the chamber, but was silenced by the irritable impatience which was expressed in his master's countenance; he lighted the way trembling and in silence, placed the lamp on the table of the deserted room, and was about to attempt some arrangement of the bed, when his master bid him begone in a tone that admitted of no delay. The old man retired, not to rest, but to prayer: and from time to time crept to the door of the apartment, in order to find out whether Ravenswood had gone to repose. His measured heavy step upon the floor was only interrupted by deep groans; and the repeated stamps of the heel of his heavy boot, intimated too clearly, that the wretched inmate was abandoning himself at such moments to paroxysms of uncontrolled agony. The old man thought that the morning for which he longed would never have dawned; but time, whose course rolls on with equal current, however it may seem more rapid or more slow to mortal apprehension, brought the dawn at last, and spread a ruddy light on the broad verge of the glistening ocean. It was early in November, and the weather was serene for the season of the year. But an easterly wind had prevailed during the night, and the advancing tide rolled nearer than usual to the foot of the crags on which the castle was founded.

With the first peep of light, Caleb Balderston again resorted to the door of Ravenswood's sleeping apartment, through a chink of which he observed him engaged in measuring the length of two or three swords which lay in a closet adjoining to the apartment. He muttered to himself, as he selected one of these weapons, "It is shorter—let him have this advantage, as he has every other."

Caleb Balderston knew too well, from what he had witnessed, upon what enterprise his master was bound, and how vain an interference on his part must necessarily prove. He had but time to retreat from the door, so nearly was he surprised by his master suddenly coming out and descending to the stables. The faithful domestic followed; and, from the disheveled appearance of his master's dress, and his ghastly looks, was confirmed in his conjecture that he had passed the night without sleep or repose. He found him busily engaged in saddling his horse, a service from which Caleb, though with faltering voice and trembling hands, offered to relieve him. Ravenswood rejected his assistance by a mute sign, and having led the animal into the court, and was just about to mount him when the old

domestic's fear giving way to the strong attachment which was the principal passion of his mind, he flung himself suddenly at Ravenswood's feet, and clasped his knees, while he exclaimed : " Oh, sir ! Oh, master ! kill me if you will, but do not go out on this dreadful errand ! Oh ! my dear master, wait but this day—the Marquis of A—— comes to-morrow, and a' will be remedied ! "

" You have no longer a master, Caleb," said Ravenswood endeavoring to extricate himself, " why, old man, would you cling to a falling tower ? "

" But I *have* a master," cried Caleb, still holding him fast, " while the heir of Ravenswood breathes. I am but a servant ; but I was born your father's—your grandfather's servant—I was born for the family—I have lived for them—I would die for them !—Stay but at home, and all will be well ! "

" Well, fool ! Well ! " said Ravenswood ; " vain old man, nothing hereafter in life will be well with me, and happiest is the hour that shall soonest close it ! "

So saying, he extricated himself from the old man's hold, threw himself on his horse, and rode out at the gate ; but instantly turning back, he threw toward Caleb, who hastened to meet him, a heavy purse of gold.

" Caleb ! " he said, with a ghastly smile, " I make you my executor ; " and again turning his bridle, he resumed his course down the hill.

The gold fell unheeded on the pavement, for the old man ran to observe the course which was taken by his master, who turned to the left down a small and broken path, which gained the sea-shore through a cleft in the rock, and led to a sort of cove, where, in former times, the boats of the castle were wont to be moored. Observing him take this course, Caleb hastened to the eastern battlement, which commanded the prospect of the whole sands, very near as far as the village of Wolf's Hope. He could easily see his master riding in that direction, as fast as the horse could carry him. The prophecy at once rushed on Balderston's mind, that the Lord of Ravenswood should perish on the Kelpie's Flow, which lay half-way betwixt the tower and the links, or sand knolls, to the northward of Wolf's Hope. He saw him accordingly reach the fatal spot, but he never saw him pass further.

Colonel Ashton, frantic for revenge, was already in the field, pacing the turf with eagerness, and looking with impatience toward the tower for the arrival of his antagonist. The sun had now risen, and showed its broad disk above the eastern sea, so that he could easily discern the horseman who rode toward

him with speed which argued impatience equal to his own. At once the figure became invisible, as if it had melted into the air. He rubbed his eyes, as if he had witnessed an apparition, and then hastened to the spot, near which he was met by Balderston, who came from the opposite direction. No trace whatever of horse or rider could be discerned; it only appeared, that the late winds and high tides had greatly extended the usual bounds of the quicksand, and that the unfortunate horseman, as appeared from the hoof-tracks, in his precipitate haste, had not attended to keep on the firm sands on the foot of the rock, but had taken the shortest and most dangerous course. One only vestige of his fate appeared. A large sable feather had been detached from his hat, and the rippling waves of the rising tide wafted it to Caleb's feet.

The old man took it up, dried it, and placed it in his bosom.

The inhabitants of Wolf's Hope were now alarmed, and crowded to the place, some on shore, and some in boats, but the search availed nothing. The tenacious depths of the quicksand, as is usual in such cases, retained its prey.

Our tale draws to a conclusion. The Marquis of A——, alarmed at the frightful reports that were current, and anxious for his kinsman's safety, arrived on the subsequent day to mourn his loss; and, after renewing in vain a search for the body, returned to forget what had happened amid the bustle of politics and state affairs.

Not so Caleb Balderston. If worldly profit could have consoled the old man, his age was better provided for than his earlier life had ever been; but life had lost to him its salt and its savor. His whole course of ideas, his feelings, whether of pride or of apprehension, of pleasure or of pain, had all arisen from his close connection with the family which was now extinguished. He held up his head no longer—forsook all his usual haunts and occupations, and seemed only to find pleasure in moping about those apartments in the old castle, which the Master of Ravenswood had last inhabited. He ate without refreshment, and slumbered without repose; and, with a fidelity sometimes displayed by the canine race, but seldom by human beings, he pined and died within a year after the catastrophe which we have narrated.

The family of Ashton did not long survive that of Ravenswood. Sir William Ashton outlived his eldest son, the Colonel, who was slain in a duel in Flanders; and Henry, by whom he was succeeded, died unmarried. Lady Ashton lived to the verge of extreme old age, the only survivor of the group of unhappy persons whose misfortunes were owing to her un-

placability. That she might internally feel compunction, and reconcile herself with Heaven whom she had offended, we will not, and we dare not, deny ; but to those around her, she did not evince the slightest symptom either of repentance or remorse. In all external appearance, she bore the same bold, haughty, unbending character, which she had displayed before these unhappy events. A splendid marble monument records her name, titles, and virtues, while her victims remain undistinguished by tomb or epitaph.

NOTES

TO THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR.

NOTE A, p. I.—THE FAMILY OF STAIR.

[It may be regretted that the Author had not adhered to his original purpose as here stated. In his Introduction to the *Chronicles of the Canon-gate* (*vide* vol. xix.), when referring to the sources or materials of his novels, he says, "I may mention, for example's sake, that the terrible catastrophe of the *Bride of Lammermoor* actually occurred in a Scottish family of rank. . . . It is unnecessary further to withdraw the real veil from this scene of family distress, nor, although it occurred more than a hundred years since, might it be altogether agreeable to the representatives of the families concerned in the narrative. It may be proper to say, that the events are imitated; but *I had neither the means nor intention of copying the manners, or tracing the characters, of the persons concerned in the real story.*"

The regret, however, is not in his stating that the tragical event said to have happened in the family of Dalrymple of Stair in 1669 had suggested the catastrophe, but in seemingly connecting the story itself with the history of that family, by quoting so fully the scandal and satirical verses of a later period.]

NOTE B, p. 10.—AUTHOR'S ILLNESS AND DICTATION OF THE NOVEL

From Lockhart's *Memoirs of Scott*.

["Ballantyne informed me that Sir Walter was so much recovered as to have resumed his usual literary tasks, though with this difference, that he now, for the first time in his life, found it necessary to employ the hand of another. The manuscript which Scott was thus dictating, was that of the *Bride of Lammermoor*, and his amanuenses were William Laidlaw and John Ballantyne;—of whom he preferred the latter, when he could be at Abbotsford, on account of the superior rapidity of his pen; and also because John kept his pen to the paper without interruption, and, though with many an arch twinkle in his eyes, and now and then an audible smack of his lips, had resolution to work on like a well-trained clerk; whereas good Laidlaw entered with such keen zest into the interest of the story as it flowed from the author's lips, that he could not suppress exclamations of surprise and delight—"Gude keep us a'!—the like o' that!—eh sirs! eh sirs!"—and so forth—which did not promote despatch.

"I have often, however, in the sequel, heard both these secretaries describe the astonishment with which they were equally affected when Scott

began this experiment. The affectionate Laidlaw beseeching him to stop dictating when his audible suffering filled every pause, 'Nay, Willie,' he answered, 'only see that the doors are fast. I would fain keep all the cry as well as all the wool to ourselves; but as to giving over work, that can only be when I am in woollen.' John Ballantyne told me, that after the first day, he always took care to have a dozen of pens made before he seated himself opposite to the sofa on which Scott lay, and that though he often turned himself on his pillow with a groan of torment, he usually continued the sentence in the same breath. But when dialogue of peculiar animation was in progress, spirit seemed to triumph altogether over matter—he arose from his couch and walked up and down the room, raising and lowering his voice, and as it were acting the parts. It was in this fashion that Scott produced the far greater portion of the *Bride of Lammermoor*."

J. G. LOCKHART.]

NOTE C, p. 23.—SIR GEORGE LOCKHART.

President of the Court of Session. He was pistolled in the High Street of Edinburgh, by John Chiesley of Dalry in the year 1689. The revenge of this desperate man was stimulated by an opinion that he had sustained injustice in a decret-arbital pronounced by the President, assigning an alimentary provision of about £93 in favor of his wife and children. He is said at first to have designed to shoot the judge while attending upon divine worship, but was diverted by some feeling concerning the sanctity of the place. After the congregation was dismissed, he dogged his victim as far as the head of the close on the south side of the Lawnmarket, in which the President's house was situated, and shot him dead as he was about to enter it. This act was done in the presence of numerous spectators. The assassin made no attempt to fly, but boasted of the deed, saying, "I have taught the President how to do justice." He had at least given him fair warning, as Jack Cade says on a similar occasion. The murderer, after undergoing the torture, by a special act of the Estates of Parliament, was tried before the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, as high sheriff, and condemned to be dragged on a hurdle to the place of execution, to have his right hand struck off while he yet lived, and finally, to be hung on the gallows with the pistol wherewith he shot the President tied round his neck. This execution took place on the 3d of April, 1689; and the incident was long remembered as a dreadful instance of what the law books call the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*.

NOTE D, p. 62.—THE BALLANTYNES.

[James Ballantyne, the eminent printer, was the eldest of three sons of a small merchant in Kelso. He was born in 1772, and became acquainted with Sir Walter Scott so early as 1784, when attending the Grammar School. Having established a printing-office, he started a local newspaper, called the *Kelso Mail*; and in 1799, there issued from his press, Scott's *Apology for Tales of Terror*, of which only 12 copies were thrown off. This was followed by the first edition of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, in 1802, a work that was considered such an admirable specimen of typography, that Ballantyne was induced to remove to Edinburgh, where for thirty years he carried on a printing establishment with great success, leaving his younger brother, Alexander, at Kelso to look after the newspaper.

John Ballantyne, the second son, was born in 1774. He commenced his career at Kelso, in September 1813, by the sale of that portion of the celebrated library of John Duke of Roxburghe which remained at Fleurs Castle. On coming to Edinburgh he was for a time connected with the printing office; but afterward turned auctioneer and bookseller, and became the publisher of several of Scott's Poems and Novels. "Jocund Johnny," as Scott sometimes called him, was a person of a volatile and joyous disposition, a most amusing companion, having the credit of being the best storyteller of his time. The state of his health, however, obliged him to relinquish business, and he died 16th June, 1821.

James, who devoted much of his time to theatrical criticism and journalism, died within four months of Sir Walter Scott, in January 1833. He assisted the author of these novels in revising the proof sheets, and suggesting minute corrections.]

NOTE E, p. 142.—THE RAID OF CALEB BALDERSTON.

The raid of Caleb Balderston on the cooper's kitchen has been universally considered on the southern side of the Tweed as grotesquely and absurdly extravagant. The Author can only say, that a similar anecdote was communicated to him, with date and names of the parties, by a noble Earl, lately deceased, whose remembrances of former days, both in Scotland and England, while they were given with a felicity and power of humor never to be forgotten by those who had the happiness of meeting his lordship in familiar society, were especially invaluable from their extreme accuracy.

Speaking after my kind and lamented informer, with the omission of names only, the anecdote ran thus:—There was a certain bachelor gentleman in one of the midland counties of Scotland, second son of an ancient family, who lived on the fortune of a second son—*videlicet*, upon some miserable small annuity, which yet was so managed and stretched out by the expedients of his man John, that his master kept the front rank with all the young men of quality in the county, and hunted, dined, dined and drank with them, upon apparently equal terms.

It is true, that as the master's society was extremely amusing, his friends contrived to reconcile his man John to accept assistance of various kinds under the rose, which they dared not to have directly offered to his master. Yet, very consistently with all this good inclination to John, and John's master, it was thought among the young fox-hunters, that it would be an excellent jest, if possible, to take John at fault.

With this intention, and, I think, in consequence of a bet, a party of four or five of these youngsters arrived at the bachelor's little mansion, which was adjacent to a considerable village. Here they alighted a short while before the dinner-hour—for it was judged regular to give John's ingenuity a fair start—and, rushing past the astonished domestic, entered the little parlor; and, telling some concerted story of the cause of their invasion, the self-invited guests asked their landlord if he could let them have some dinner. Their friend gave them a hearty and unembarrassed reception, and, for the matter of dinner, referred them to John. He was summoned accordingly—received his master's orders to get dinner ready for the party who had thus unexpectedly arrived: and, without changing a muscle of his countenance, promised prompt obedience. Great was the speculation of the visitors, and probably of the landlord also, what was to be the issue of John's fair promises. Some of the more curious had taken a peep into the kitchen, and could see nothing there to realize the prospect

held out by the *Major-Domo*. But punctual as the dinner-hour struck on the village clock, John placed before them a stately rump of boiled beef, with a proper accompaniment of greens, amply sufficient to dine the whole party, and to decide the bet against those among the visitors who expected to take John napping. The explanation was the same as in the case of Caleb Balderston. John had used the freedom to carry off the *kail-pot* of a rich old chuff in the village, and brought it to his master's house, leaving the proprietor and his friends to dine on bread and cheese; and as John said, "good enough for them." The fear of giving offence to so many persons of distinction kept the poor man sufficiently quiet, and he was afterwards remunerated by some indirect patronage, so that the jest was admitted a good one on all sides. In England, at any period, or in some parts of Scotland at the present day, it might not have passed off so well.

NOTE F, p. III.—ANCIENT HOSPITALITY.

It was once the universal custom to place ale, wine, or some strong liquor in the chamber of an honored guest, to assuage his thirst should he feel any on awakening in the night, which, considering that the hospitality of that period often reached excess, was by no means unlikely. The Author has met some instances of it in former days, and in old-fashioned families. It was, perhaps, no poetic fiction that records how

" My cummer and I lay down to sleep
With two pint stoups at our bed-feet ;
And aye when we waken't we drank them dry :
What think you o' my cummer and I."

It is a current story in Teviotdale, that, in the house of an ancient family of distinction, much addicted to the Presbyterian cause, a Bible was always put into the sleeping apartment of the guests, along with a bottle of strong ale. On some occasion there was a meeting of clergymen in the vicinity of the castle, all of whom were invited to dinner by the worthy Baronet, and several abode all night. According to the fashion of the times, seven of the reverend guests were allotted to one large barrack-room, which was used on such occasions of extended hospitality. The butler took care that the divines were presented, according to custom, each with a Bible and a bottle of ale. But after a little consultation among themselves, they are said to have recalled the domestic as he was leaving the apartment. "My friend," said one of the venerable guests, "you must know, when we meet to together, as brethren, the youngest minister reads aloud a portion of Scripture to the rest; only one Bible, therefore, is necessary, take away the other six, and in their place bring six more bottles of ale."

This synod would have suited the "hermit-sage" of Johnson, who answered a pupil who inquired for the real road to happiness, with the celebrated line,

" Come, my lad, and drink some beer ! "

NOTE G, p. 158.—APPEAL TO PARLIAMENT.

The power of appeal from the Court of Session, the supreme Judges of Scotland, to the Scottish Parliament, in cases of civil right, was fiercely debated before the Union. It was a privilege highly desirable for the subject

as the examination and occasional reversal of their sentences in Parliament, might serve as a check upon the Judges, which they greatly required at a time when they were much more distinguished for legal knowledge than for uprightness and integrity.

The members of the Faculty of Advocates (so the Scottish barristers are termed), in the year 1674, incurred the violent displeasure of the Court of Session, on account of their refusal to renounce the right of appeal to Parliament; and, by a very arbitrary procedure, the majority of the number were banished from Edinburgh, and consequently deprived of their professional practice for several sessions, or terms. But by the articles of the Union, an appeal to the British House of Peers has been secured to the Scottish subject; and that right has, no doubt, had its influence in forming the impartial and independent character, which, much contrary to the practice of their predecessors, the Judges of the Court of Session have since displayed.

It is easy to conceive, that an old lawyer, like the Lord Keeper in the text, should feel alarm at the judgments given in his favor, upon grounds of strict penal law, being brought to appeal under a new and dreaded procedure in a Court eminently impartial, and peculiarly moved by considerations of equity.

In earlier additions of this Work, this legal distinction was not sufficiently explained.

NOTE H, p. 181.—THE POOR-MAN-OF-MUTTON.

The blade-bone of a shoulder of mutton is called in Scotland "a poor man," as in some parts of England it is termed "a poor knight of Windsor;" in contrast, it must be presumed, to the baronial Sir Loin. It is said, that in the last age an old Scottish peer, whose conditions (none of the most gentle) were marked by a strange and fierce-looking exaggeration of the Highland countenance, chanced to be indisposed while he was in London attending Parliament. The master of the hotel where he lodged, anxious to show attention to his noble guest, waited on him to enumerate the contents of his well-stocked larder, so as to endeavor to hit on something which might suit his appetite. "I think, landlord," said his lordship, rising up from his couch, and throwing back the tartan plaid with which he had screened his grim and ferocious visage—"I think I could eat a morsel of a *poor man*." The landlord fled in terror, having no doubt that his guest was a cannibal, who might be in the habit of eating a slice of a tenant, as light food, when he was under regimen.

NOTE I, p. 212.—RUNNING FOOTMEN.

Hereupon I, Jedediah Cleishbotham, crave leave to remark, *primo*, which signifies, in the first place, that, having in vain inquired at the Circulating Library in Gandercleugh, albeit it aboundeth in similar vanities, for this samyn Middleton and his Mad World,* it was at length shown unto me amongst other ancient fooleries carefully compiled by one Dodsley, who, doubtless, hath his reward for neglect of precious time; and having misused so much of mine as was necessary for the purpose, I therein found that a play-man is brought in as a footman, whom a knight is made to greet facetiously with the epithet of "linen stocking and three-score miles a-day."

* (In Dodsley's *Select Collection of Old Plays*, vol. v. pp. 307-402, is reprinted the Play by Thomas Middleton, first published in 1603, entitled *A Mad World, my Masters*.)

Secundo (which is secondly in the vernacular), under Mr. Pattieson's favor, some men not altogether so old as he would represent them, do remember this species of menial, or forerunner. In evidence of which, I, Jedediah Cleishbotham, though mine eyes yet do me good service, remember me to have seen one of this tribe clothed in white, and bearing a staff, who ran daily before the stage-coach of the umquhile John, Earl of Hope-ton, father of this Earl, Charles, that now is; unto whom it may be justly said, that Renown playeth the part of a running footman, or precursor: and as the poet singeth—

“ Mars standing by asserts his quarrel,
And Fame flies after with a laurel.”

NOTE J, p. 237.—TRUMPETER MARINE AT SHERIFFMUIR.

(The battle of Sheriffmuir, which took place in November 1715, was claimed as a victory by both sides. This gave rise to a clever popular song printed at the time as a broadside, under the title of “*A Race at Sheriffmuir, fairly run on the 15th November, 1715, to the tune of THE HORSEMAN'S SPORT.*”

“ There's some say that we wan, some say that they wan.
Some say that nane wan at a', man :
But one thing I'm sure, that at *Sheriffmuir*
A battle there was, which I saw, man.
And we ran, and they ran, and they ran, and we ran,
And we ran, and they ran awa, man.”

In these satirical verses Trumpeter Marine is introduced, and in proof of Sir Walter's accuracy as to the name, the following note may be added, as recent editors of this ballad have altered it to Maclean.

In the *Present State of Great Britain*, London, 1710, Francis Marine is second on the list of Queen Anne's Trumpeters for Scotland, while in the volume for 1716 his name occurs among the officers of the King's household, as “ Francis Marine, Sen.,” and there is added as fifth trumpeter, “ Francis Marine, Jun.” These household trumpeters were employed, as they are to this day in the Lyon Office, for announcing royal proclamations, and attending the Circuit Courts of Justiciary. Another son or grandson, named James Marine, continues to appear as trumpeter down to 1785.

The words referred to, in the original ballad of Sheriffmuir, are as follow :—

And Trumpet Marine too, whose breeks were not clean, through
Misfortune he happen'd to fa', man :
By saving his neck, his trumpet did break,
Came off without musick at a', man.
And we ran, and they ran, etc.

No doubt there was a John Maclean, trumpeter, sent on a message from the rebels to the Duke of Argyle before the battle, but the modern improvers have spoiled the verses both as to rhyme and accuracy; while they have overlooked the description of the trumpeter's dress, which would evidently indicate his not being a Highlander.)

GLOSSARY.

TO

THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR.

A', all.

ABEE, let alone.

ABEEZE, ablaze.

ABUNE, above.

AE, one.

AFF, off.

AGAIN, against, until.

AHINT, behind.

AIRT, to direct.

AITS, oats.

AIVER, a broken-winded horse.

ALLENARLY, solely.

AN, if.

ANE ANITHER, one another.

AROINT, avaunt.

ASS, ash.

AULD REEKIE, Edinburgh.

AW, owe

BACK-SEY, the sirloin.

BAILIE, a magistrate.

BAIRN, a child.

BAWBE, a halfpenny.

BEDESMAN, one supported by charity

BEDRAL, beadle, sexton.

BEFLUMM, befool.

BIDE, stay, wait.

BINNA, be not.

BIRKIE, a lively little fellow.

BIRKIE, the game of beggar-my-neighbor.

BIRLING, drinking.

BLACKAISED, black-visaged.

BLEEZE, blaze.

BLYTHE, merry.

BLACK AS THE CROOK, *i.e.*, the chain used
for suspending a pot in old fireplaces.

BOGLE, a ghost.

BOUROCK, a mound.

BOW AND BRACH, bow and hound.

BOWK, body, carcass.

BRANDER, broil.

BRAW, brave, fine.

BRENT, straight and smooth.

BREWIS, the scum caused by boiling.

BROCHE, a roasting spit.

BUND, bound.

BUSK, to deck up.

CA', call.

CAICKLING, cackling.

CALLANT, a young lad.

CANTRIPS, tricks, vagaries.

CANTY, cheerful.

CAPOT, to win all the tricks at *picquet*.

CARLE, a fellow.

CARLINE, a jade.

CAULD BE MY CAST, cold be my fate or lot

CHAUMER, chamber.

CHAPPIN, a quart.

CHAPPIT, struck.

CHIELD, a fellow.

CLAVERS, idle talk, gossip.

CLAW UP YOUR MITTENS, to finish you
give the *coup de grace*.

CLOCKIN HEN, a sitting hen.

COCKERNONY, a top-knot on the head.

COG, to empty or pour out.

CUMMER, a gossip or friend.

CUPAR, WILL TO, MAUN TO, a wilful man
must have his way.

DAFFING, frolicking, larking.

DAFT, crazy.

DEIL, devil.

DING, knock.

DINNA, do not.

DITTAY, an indictment.

DOITED, dolted

DONNART, stupid.

DOO, a dove.

DOUR, stubborn.

DRAP-DE-BERRY, fine woollen cloth.

DREIGH, dry.

DROUTHY, dry.

DUNCH, to nudge.

DUNE, done.

DUNG, knocked.

DWINING, declining.

EBB, shallow.

EEN, eyes.

EXIES, hysterics.

FAT, what.

FAILZIE, *legal*, to fail.

FECKLESS, feeble, silly.

FELL, terrible.

FIT, the foot.

FLYTE, to scold.

FORBBARS, ancestors.

FORBY, beside.

FORGATHER, come together, become intimate.
FOU, a bushel.
FOUL THIEF, the devil.
FOV, an entertainment of gaudeamus. at a leave-taking.
FRAE, from.
FREMD, strange.
FREIT, an omen.

GAE, go.
GAISLING, a gosling.
GANE, gone.
GANG, go.
GAR, make, oblige.
GATE, way, manner, direction.
GAUGER, exciseman.
GAWSIE, plump, jolly.
GEAR, money, property.
GEIZENED, leaky.
GIE, give.
GIF, if.
GIRD, a hoop.
GIRN, grin.
GLEDGING, looking askance.
GLERD, a spark.
GLEEING, squinting.
GLENT, glance.
GLOWER, to gaze.
GOWD, gold.
GOWK, a cuckoo, a fool.
GRAITH, furniture.
GREET, cry, weep.
GUDE GUIDE US! Lord preserve us!
GUDEMAN, head of the house, applied to the husband.
GUDEWIFE, head of the house, applied to the wife.
GUSTING THEIR GABS, pleasing their palates.

HAGGIS, a favorite Scotch pudding.
HAILL, whole.
HATTED KIT, a bowlful of sour or curdled cream.
HAUD, hold.
HEATHER-COW, twig of heath.
HELLICAT, villain.
How, hollow.

ILKA, each, every.
ILKA LAND ITS AIN LAUCH (LAW), every place its own custom.
ILL-CLECKET, ill-hatched.
ILLDEEDY GETT, a mischievous urchin.
INGAN, an onion.
INLAKE, death, deficiency.

JEEST, jest.
JOW, to toll.

KAIL, broth.
KAILYARD, cabbage garden.
KAIN, a tax (in kind) paid by tenant to landlord.
KEBBUCK, a large cheese.
KEEK, peep.
KEEP HER THREEP, keep on her course of resolution.
KEN, know.
KENSPECKLE, *outré*, different from other persons.

KIMMER, a gossip, a friend.
KIPPAGE, confusion.
KIPPER, dried salmon.
KIST, a chest, coffin.
KITTLE, to tickle.

LAMMER, amber.
LANDWARD, in the country.
LAUCH, law.
LAWING, the account or bill.
LEE, a lie.
LIPPEN, to trust.
LITH AND LIMB, in bodily shape, *entirely*
LOOT, allowed.
LOUPEN, leaped.
LOWE, flame.
LUG, the ear.
LUMM, a chimney.
LURDANE, blockhead, *lazy*.

MAILING, a small farm.
MAIN, a hand at dice.
MAUN, must.
MEAL-POKE, meal-bag.
MELTER, a male-herring.
MERSE, Berwickshire.
MESSAN, a cur.
MIRK, dark.
MISGIE, go wrong.
MONY, many.
MUCKLE, much.
MULL, a snuff-horn.
MURGANS, or MURGEONS, mouths.
MY SARTIE! my faith!

NAPERY, table linen.
NATHELESS, nevertheless.
NE'ER-DO-WELL, a worthless, *do-nothing* person.
NOULD I, would I not.
NOURICE-SHIP, nurse-ship.
NOWT, black cattle.

OWER, over.
OXTER, armpit.

PANDS, pledges.
PAROCHINE, parish.
PAT, put.
PEAT, turf.
PEGH, pant.
PEN CAN'T PLAV, pen can do nothing.
PICK-MAW, a species of gull.
PICKLE, a little.
PIGS, earthenware jars.
PINNYWINKLES, the stocks.
PINT-STOUP, pint measure.
PLACK, a small copper coin.
PLISKIE, a prank.
PLOY, a merry-making.
Pu', pull.
PUND SCOTS, 1s. 8d. sterling.

QUEAN, a young woman, a *flirt*.

RAILY, an upper dress.
REAVING, robbing.
REDD, to clear.
RUDAS, a scolding jade.
RUNLET, a small barrel.

SALL, shall.

SARABAND, a grave Spanish dance.

SARK, a shirt.

SAUL, soul.

SCRAUGH, screech.

SCUNNER, to loathe.

SHAUGHLED, worn down.

SIC, such.

SICCAN, such.

SILLER, silver money.

SKART, scratch

SKIRL, scream.

SLOKEN, quench.

SNAP, a biscuit.

SNECKDRAWER, a sneak.

SNEESHIN, snuff.

SOOTHFAST, true, honest.

SORRA A BIT, devil a bit.

SOUGH, a sigh, a report.

SOUP, sup, spoonful.

SOUPLE, a switch.

SOUSE, to give a drubbing.

SOWENS, a thick gruel.

SPEER, ask, inquire.

SPULE-BANE, shoulder-blade.

STEADING, farm buildings.

STEER, to disturb.

STOUP, liquid measure.

STRAE, straw.

STREAK, stretch.

SULD, should.

SUMPH, a slow dunce.

SWANKING, active, agile.

SWAUK, strike forcibly.

SWAP, to strike soundly.

SYBO, a young onion.

SYND, to rinse.

SYNE, since, ago.

TAEN, taken.

TAID, a toad.

TAIT, a small portion.

TANTRUM the pet, great airs, a vagary.

TAP O' TOW an irritable person, easily in
flamed.

TESTERS, bed covers.

THOWLESS, inactive.

THRAW, twist.

THROUGH-STANE, a flat grayestone.

THUNNER, thunder.

TIMMER, woodwork.

TOCHER, dowry.

TOUT, the pet.

TROTH, sure.

TROW, trust.

TUP, a ram.

VIRGINALS, an old-fashioned sort of piano.

VIVERS, victuals.

VISIE, inspection.

WAD, would.

WADSETTER, a holder of another's property
under pledge.

WAE, sorry.

WAME, belly.

WAP, a smart stroke.

WARE, to spend.

WARLOCK, a witch.

WASTLAND, west country.

WAT, wet.

WATER-PURPIE, the brook-lime or horse-
well grass.

WAUR, worse.

WEAN, a child.

WEE, little.

WEEL, well,

WHA, who.

WHAMPLE, a blow.

WHEEN, a few.

WHILK, which.

WHIN-BUSH, furze.

WHITE-HASS, a sausage pudding.

WHOMLING, turning.

Wi' IT, with it.

WILL TO CUPAR, MAUN TO CUPAR, a wilful
man must have his way.

WINNA, will not.

WOODIE, the gallows.

WRAITH, a ghost seen before death

WUD, mad.

WYTE, blame.

YUL, ale.

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MY AUNT MARGARET'S MIRROR.

INTRODUCTION.

THE species of publication which has come to be generally known by the title of *Annual*, being a miscellany of prose and verse, equipped with numerous engravings, and put forth every year about Christmas, had flourished for a long while in Germany, before it was imitated in this country by an enterprising bookseller, a German by birth, Mr. Ackermann. The rapid success of his work, as is the custom of the time, gave birth to a host of rivals, and, among others, to an annual styled *The Keepsake*, the first volume of which appeared in 1828, and attracted much notice, chiefly in consequence of the very uncommon splendor of its illustrative accompaniments. The expenditure which the spirited proprietors lavished on this magnificent volume is understood to have been not less than from ten to twelve thousand pounds sterling!

Various gentlemen, of such literary reputation that any one might think it an honor to be associated with them, had been announced as contributors to this annual, before application was made to me to assist in it; and I accordingly placed with much pleasure at the Editor's disposal a few fragments, originally designed to have been worked into the *Chronicles of the Canongate*, besides a MS. Drama, the long-neglected performance of my youthful days—*The House of Aspen*.

The Keepsake for 1828 included, however, only three of these little prose tales—of which the first in order was that entitled "My Aunt Margaret's Mirror." By way of *introduction* to this, when now included in a general collection of my lucubrations, I have only to say that it is a mere transcript, or at least with very little embellishment, of a story that I remembered being struck with in my childhood, when told at the fireside by a lady of eminent virtues, and no inconsiderable share of talent, one of the ancient and honorable house of Swinton. She was a kind relation of my own, and met her death in a manner so shocking, being killed in a fit of insanity by a female attendant who had been attached to her person for half a lifetime, that I cannot now recall her memory, child as I was when the catastrophe occurred, without a painful reawakening of perhaps the first images of horror that the scenes of real life stamped on my mind.

This good spinster had in her composition a strong vein of the superstitious, and was pleased, among other fancies, to read alone in her chamber by a taper fixed in a candlestick which she had formed out of a human skull. One night, this strange piece of furniture acquired suddenly the power of locomotion, and, after performing some odd circles on her chimney-piece, fairly leaped on the floor, and continued to roll about the apartment. Mrs. Swinton calmly proceeded to the adjoining room for another light, and had the satisfaction to penetrate the mystery on the spot. Rats abounded in the ancient building she inhabited, and one of these had managed to ensconce itself within her favorite *memento mori*. Though thus endowed with a more than feminine share of nerve, she entertained largely that belief in supernatural which in those times was not considered as sitting ungracefully on the grave and aged of her condition; and the story of the Magic Mirror was one for which she vouched with particular confidence, alleging indeed that one of her own family had been an eye-witness of the incidents recorded in it.

“ I tell the tale as it was told to me.”

Stories enow of much the same cast will present themselves to the recollection of such of my readers as have ever dabbled in a species of lore to which I certainly gave more hours, at one period of my life, than I should gain any credit by confessing.

August, 1831.

MY AUNT MARGARETS MIRROR.

“ There are times
When Fancy plays her gambols, in despite
Even of our watchful senses, when in sooth
Substance seems shadow, shadow substance seems,
When the broad, palpable, and mark'd partition,
'Twixt that which is and is not, seems dissolved,
As if the mental eye gain'd power to gaze
Beyond the limits of the existing world.
Such hours of shadowy dreams I better love
Than all the gross realities of life.”

ANONYMOUS.

MY AUNT MARGARET was one of that respected sisterhood, upon whom devolve all the trouble and solicitude incidental to the possession of children, excepting only that which attends their entrance into the world. We were a large family, of very different dispositions and constitutions. Some were dull and peevish—they were sent to Aunt Margaret to be amused ; some were rude, romping, and boisterous—they were sent to Aunt Margaret to be kept quiet, or rather that their noise might be removed out of hearing : those who were indisposed were sent with the prospect of being nursed—those who were stubborn, with the hope of their being subdued by the kindness of Aunt Margaret's discipline ; in short, she had all the various duties of a mother, without the credit and dignity of the maternal character. The busy scene of her various cares is now over—of the invalids and the robust, the kind and the rough, the peevish and pleased children, who thronged her little parlor from morning to night, not one now remains alive but myself ; who, afflicted by early infirmity was one of the most delicate of her nurslings, yet, nevertheless, have outlived them all.

It is still my custom, and shall be so while I have the use of my limbs, to visit my respected relation at least three times a-week. Her abode is about half-a-mile from the suburbs of the town in which I reside ; and is accessible not only by the high-

road, from which it stands at some distance, but by means of a greensward footpath, leading through some pretty meadows. I have so little left to torment me in life, that it is one of my greatest vexations to know that several of these sequestered fields have been devoted as sites for building. In that which is nearest the town, wheelbarrows have been at work for several weeks, in such numbers, that, I verily believe, its whole surface, to the depth of at least eighteen inches, was mounted in these monotrochs at the same moment, and in the act of being transported from one place to another. Huge triangular piles of planks are also reared in different parts of the devoted messuage; and a little group of trees, that still grace the eastern end, which rises in a gentle ascent, have just received warning to quit, expressed by a daub of white paint, and are to give place to a curious grove of chimneys.

It would, perhaps, hurt others in my situation to reflect that this little range of pasturage once belonged to my father (whose family was of some consideration in the world), and was sold by patches to remedy distresses in which he involved himself in an attempt by commercial adventure to redeem his diminished fortune. While the building scheme was in full operation, this circumstance was often pointed out to me by the class of friends who are anxious that no part of your misfortunes should escape your observation. "Such pasture-ground!—lying at the very town's end—in turnips and potatoes, the parks would bring £20 per acre, and if leased for building—Oh, it was a gold mine!—And all sold for an old song out of the ancient possessor's hands!" My comforters cannot bring me to repine much on this subject. If I could be allowed to look back on the past without interruption, I could willingly give up the enjoyment of present income, and the hope of future profit, to those who have purchased what my father sold. I regret the alteration of the ground only because it destroys associations, and I would more willingly (I think) see the Earl's Closes in the hands of strangers, retaining their sylvan appearance, than know them for my own, if torn up by agriculture, or covered with buildings. Mine are the sensations of poor Logan:—

"The horrid plough has razed the green
Where yet a child I stray'd;
The axe has felled the hawthorn screen,
The schoolboy's summer shade."

I hope, however, the threatened devastation will not be consummated in my day. Although the adventurous spirit of times short while since passed gave rise to the undertaking, I have

been encouraged to think, that the subsequent changes have so far damped the spirit of speculation, that the rest of the woodland footpath leading to Aunt Margaret's retreat will be left undisturbed for her time and mine. I am interested in this, for every step of the way, after I have passed through the green already mentioned, has for me something of early remembrance :—There is the stile at which I can recollect a cross child's-maid upbraiding me with my infirmity, as she lifted me coarsely and carelessly over the flinty steps, which my brothers traversed with shout and bound. I remember the suppressed bitterness of the moment, and, conscious of my own inferiority, the feeling of envy with which I regarded the easy movements and elastic steps of my more happily formed brethren. Alas ! these goodly barks have all perished on life's wide ocean, and only that which seemed so little seaworthy, as the naval phrase goes, has reached the port when the tempest is over. Then there is the pool, where, manœuvring our little navy constructed out of the broad water flags, my elder brother fell in, and was scarce saved from the watery element to die under Nelson's banner. There is the hazel copse also, in which my brother Henry used to gather nuts, thinking little that he was to die in an Indian jungle in quest of rupees.

There is so much more of remembrance about the little walk, that—as I stop, rest on my crutch-headed cane, and look round with that species of comparison between the thing I was and that which I now am—it almost induces me to doubt my own identity ; until I find myself in face of the honeysuckle porch of Aunt Margaret's dwelling, with its irregularity of front, and its odd projecting latticed windows ; where the workmen seem to have made a study that no one of them should resemble another, in form, size, or in the old-fashioned stone entablature and labels which adorn them. This tenement, once the manor-house of Earl's Closes, we still retain a slight hold upon ; for, in some family arrangements, it had been settled upon Aunt Margaret during the term of her life. Upon this frail tenure depends, in a great measure, the last shadow of the family of Bothwell of Earl's Closes, and their last slight connection with their paternal inheritance. The only representative will then be an infirm old man, moving not unwillingly to the grave, which has devoured all that were dear to his affections.

When I have indulged such thoughts for a minute or two, I enter the mansion, which is said to have been the gatehouse only of the original building, and find one being on whom time seems to have made little impression ; for the Aunt Margaret of to-day bears the same proportional age to the Aunt Margaret

of my early youth, that the boy of ten years old does to the **man** of (by'r Lady !) some fifty-six years. The old lady's invariable costume has doubtless some share in confirming one in the opinion, that time has stood still with Aunt Margaret.

The brown or chocolate-colored silk gown, with ruffles of the same stuff at the elbow, within which are others of Mechlin lace—the black silk gloves, or mitts, the white hair combed back upon a roll, and the cap of spotless cambric, which closes around the venerable countenance, as they were not the costume of 1780, so neither were they that of 1826; they are altogether a style peculiar to the individual Aunt Margaret. There she still sits, as she sat thirty years since, with her wheel or the stocking, which she works by the fire in winter and by the window in summer; or, perhaps, venturing as far as the porch in an unusually fine summer evening. Her frame, like some well-constructed piece of mechanics, still performs the operations for which it had seemed destined; going its round with an activity which is gradually diminished, yet indicating no probability that it will soon come to a period.

The solicitude and affection which had made Aunt Margaret the willing slave to the inflictions of a whole nursery, have now for their object the health and comfort of one old and infirm man, the last remaining relative of her family, and the only one who can still find interest in the traditional stores which she hoards, as some miser hides the gold which he desires that no one should enjoy after his death.

My conversation with Aunt Margaret generally relates little either to the present or to the future: for the passing day we possess as much as we require, and we neither of us wish for more; and for that which is to follow we have on this side of the grave neither hopes, nor fears, nor anxiety. We therefore naturally look back to the past; and forget the present fallen fortunes and declined importance of our family, in recalling the hours when it was wealthy and prosperous.

With this slight introduction, the reader will know as much of Aunt Margaret and her nephew as is necessary to comprehend the following conversation and narrative.

Last week, when, late in a summer evening, I went to call on the old lady to whom my reader is now introduced, I was received by her with all her usual affection and benignity; while, at the same time, she seemed abstracted and disposed to silence. I asked her the reason. "They have been clearing out the old chapel," she said, "John Clayhudgeons having, it seems, discovered that the stuff within—being, I suppose, the remains of **our ancestors**—was excellent for top-dressing the meadows."

Here I started up with more alacrity than I have displayed for some years ; but sat down while my aunt added, laying her hand upon my sleeve, " The chapel has been long considered as common ground, my dear, and used for a penfold, and what objection can we have to the man for employing what is his own, to his own profit ? Besides, I did speak to him, and he very readily and civilly promised, that, if he found bones or monuments, they should be carefully respected and reinstated ; and what more could I ask ? So, the first stone they found bore the name of Margaret Bothwell, 1585, and I have caused it to be laid carefully aside, as I think it betokens death ; and having served my namesake two hundred years, it has just been cast up in time to do me the same good turn. My house has been long put in order, as far as the small earthly concerns require it, but who shall say that their account with Heaven is sufficiently revised ? "

" After what you have said, aunt," I replied, " perhaps I ought to take my hat and go away, and so I should, but that there is on this occasion a little alloy mingled with our devotion. To think of death at all times is a duty—to suppose it nearer, from the finding of an old gravestone, is superstition ; and you, with your strong useful common sense, which was so long the prop of a fallen family, are the last person whom I should have suspected of such weakness."

" Neither would I have deserved your suspicions, kinsman," answered Aunt Margaret, " if we were speaking of any incident occurring in the actual business of human life. But for all this I have a sense of superstition about me, which I do not wish to part with. It is a feeling which separates me from this age, and links me with that to which I am hastening ; and even when it seems, as now, to lead me to the brink of the grave, and bids me gaze on it, I do not love that it should be dispelled. It soothes my imagination, without influencing my reason or conduct."

" I profess, my good lady," replied I, " that had any one but you made such a declaration, I should have thought it as capricious as that of the clergyman, who, without vindicating his false reading, preferred, from habit's sake, his old Mumpsimus to the modern Sumpsimus."

" Well," answered my aunt, " I must explain my inconsistency in this particular, by comparing it to another. I am, as you know, a piece of that old-fashioned thing called a Jacobite ; but I am so in sentiment and feeling only ; for a more loyal subject never joined in prayers for the health and wealth of George the Fourth, whom God long preserve ! But I dare say that kind-hearted sovereign would not deem that an old woman did him

much injury if she leaned back in her arm-chair, just in such a twilight as this, and thought of the high-mettled men, whose sense of duty called them to arms against his grandfather ; and how, in a cause which they deemed that of their rightful prince and country,

‘ They fought till their hands to the broadsword were glued,
They fought against fortune with hearts unsubdued.’

Do not come at such a moment, when my head is full of plaids, pibrochs, and claymores, and ask my reason to admit what, I am afraid, it cannot deny—I mean, that the public advantage peremptorily demanded that these things should cease to exist. I cannot, indeed, refuse to allow the justice of your reasoning ; but yet, being convinced against my will, you will gain little by your motion. You might as well read to an infatuated lover the catalogue of his mistress’s imperfections ; for, when he has been compelled to listen to the summary, you will only get for answer, that, ‘ he lo’es her a’ the better.’”

I was not sorry to have changed the gloomy train of Aunt Margaret’s thoughts, and replied in the same tone, “ Well, I can’t help being persuaded that our good king is the more sure of Mrs. Bothwell’s loyal affection, that he has the Stuart right of birth, as well as the Act of Succession in his favor.”

“ Perhaps my attachment, were its source of consequence, might be found warmer for the union of the rights you mention,” said Aunt Margaret ; “ but, upon my word, it would be as sincere if the king’s right were founded only on the will of the nation, as declared at the Revolution. I am none of your *juere devino* folk.”

“ And a Jacobite notwithstanding.”

“ And a Jacobite notwithstanding ; or rather, I will give you leave to call me one of the party which, in Queen Anne’s time, were called *Whimsicals* ; because they were sometimes operated upon by feelings, sometimes by principle. After all, it is very hard that you will not allow an old woman to be as inconsistent in her political sentiments, as mankind in general show themselves in all the various courses of life ; since you cannot point out one of them, in which the passions and prejudices of those who pursue it are not perpetually carrying us away from the path which our reason points out.”

“ True, aunt ; but you are a wilful wanderer, who should be forced back into the right path.”

“ Spare me, I entreat you,” replied Aunt Margaret. “ You remember the Gaelic song, though I dare say I mispronounce the words—

'Hateel mohateel nah dowskee mee.'

'I am asleep, do not waken me.'

I tell you, kinsman, that the sort of waking dreams which my imagination spins out, in what your favorite Wordsworth calls 'moods of my own mind,' are worth all the rest of my more active days. Then, instead of looking forward as I did in youth, and forming for myself fairy palaces, upon the verge of the grave, I turn my eyes backward upon the days and manners of my better time; and the sad, yet soothing recollections come so close and interesting, that I almost think it sacrilege to be wiser, or more rational, or less prejudiced, than those to whom I looked up in my younger years."

"I think I now understand what you mean," I answered, "and can comprehend why you should occasionally prefer the twilight of illusion to the steady light of reason."

"Where there is no task," she rejoined, "to be performed, we may sit in the dark if we like it—if we go to work, we must ring for candles."

"And amidst such shadowy and doubtful light," continued I, "imagination frames her enchanted and enchanting visions, and sometimes passes them upon the senses for reality."

"Yes," said Aunt Margaret, who is a well-read woman, "to those who resemble the translator of Tasso,

'Prevailing poet, whose undoubting mind
Believed the magic wonders which he sung.'

It is not required for this purpose, that you should be sensible of the painful horrors which an actual belief in such prodigies inflicts—such a belief, now-a-days, belongs only to fools and children. It is not necessary that your ears should tingle, and your complexion change, like that of Theodore, at the approach of the spectral huntsman. All that is indispensable for the enjoyment of the milder feeling of supernatural awe is, that you should be susceptible of the slight shuddering which creeps over you when you hear a tale of terror—that well-vouched tale which the narrator, having first expressed his general disbelief of all such legendary lore, selects and produces, as having something in it which he has been always obliged to give up as inexplicable. Another symptom is, a momentary hesitation to look round you, when the interest of the narrative is at the highest; and the third, a desire to avoid looking into a mirror, when you are alone, in your chamber, for the evening. I mean such are signs which indicate the crisis, when a female imagination is in due temper:

ture to enjoy a ghost story. I do not pretend to describe those which express the same disposition in a gentleman."

"This last symptom, dear aunt, of shunning the mirror, seems likely to be a rare occurrence amongst the fair sex."

"You are a novice in toilet fashions, my dear kinsman. All women consult the looking-glass, with anxiety before they go into company; but when they return home, the mirror has not the same charm. The die has been cast—the party has been successful or unsuccessful, in the impression which she desired to make. But without going deeper into the mysteries of the dressing-table, I will tell you that I myself, like many other honest folk, do not like to see the blank black front of a large mirror in a room dimly lighted, and where the reflection of the candle seems rather to lose itself in the deep obscurity of the glass, than to be reflected back again into the apartment. That space of inky darkness seems to be a field for Fancy to play her revels in. She may call up other features to meet us, instead of the reflection of our own; or, as in the spells of Hallowe'en, which we learned in childhood, some unknown form may be seen peeping over our shoulder. In short, when I am in a ghost-seeing humor, I make my handmaiden draw the green curtains over the mirror before I go into the room, so that she may have the first shock of the apparition, if there be any to be seen. But to tell you the truth, this dislike to look into a mirror in particular times and places, has, I believe, its original foundation in a story which came to me by tradition from my grandmother, who was a party concerned in the scene of which I will now tell you."

THE MIRROR.

CHAPTER FIRST.

You are fond (said my aunt) of sketches of the society which has passed away. I wish I could describe to you Sir Philip Forester, the "chartered libertine" of Scottish good company, about the end of the last century. I never saw him indeed; but my mother's traditions were full of his wit, gallantry, and dissipation. This gay knight flourished about the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century. He was the Sir Charles Easy and the Lovelace of his day and country; renowned for the number of duels he had fought, and the successful intrigues which he had carried on. The supremacy which he had attained in the fashionable world was

absolute : and when we combine it with one or two anecdotes, for which, "if laws were made for every degree," he ought certainly to have been hanged, the popularity of such a person really serves to show, either that the present times are much more decent, if not more virtuous, than they formerly were ; or, that high breeding then was of more difficult attainment than that which is now so called ; and consequently, entitled the successful professor to a proportionable degree of plenary indulgences and privileges. No beau of this day could have borne out so ugly a story as that of Pretty Peggy Grindstone, the miller's daughter at Sillermills—it had well-nigh made work for the Lord Advocate. But it hurt Sir Philip Forester no more than the hail hurts the hearthstone. He was as well received in society as ever, and dined with the Duke of A—— the day the poor girl was buried. She died of heartbreak. But that has nothing to do with my story.

Now, you must listen to a single word upon kith, kin, and ally ; I promise you I will not be prolix. But it is necessary to the authenticity of my legend, that you should know that Sir Philip Forester, with his handsome person, elegant accomplishments, and fashionable manners married the younger Miss Falconer of King's-Copland. The elder sister of this lady had previously become the wife of my grandfather, Sir Geoffrey Bothwell, and brought into our family a good fortune. Miss Jemima, or Miss Jemmie Falconer, as she was usually called, had also about ten thousand pounds sterling—then thought a very handsome portion indeed.

The two sisters were extremely different, though each had their admirers while they remained single. Lady Bothwell had some touch of the old King's-Copland blood about her. She was bold, though not to the degree of audacity ; ambitious, and desirous to raise her house and family ; and was, as has been said, a considerable spur to my grandfather, who was otherwise an indolent man ; but whom, unless he has been slandered, his lady's influence involved in some political matters which had been more wisely let alone. She was a woman of high principle, however, and masculine good sense, as some of her letters testify, which are still in my wainscot cabinet.

Jemmie Falconer was the reverse of her sister in every respect. Her understanding did not reach above the ordinary pitch, if, indeed, she could be said to have attained it. Her beauty, while it lasted, consisted, in a great measure, of delicacy of complexion and regularity of features, without any peculiar force of expression. Even these charms faded under the sufferings attendant on an ill-sorted match. She was passionately

attached to her husband, by whom she was treated with a callous, yet polite indifference, which, to one whose heart was as tender as her judgment was weak, was more painful perhaps than absolute ill-usage. Sir Philip was a voluptuary, that is, a completely selfish egotist, whose disposition and character resembled the rapier he wore, polished, keen, and brilliant, but inflexible and un pitying. As he observed carefully all the usual forms toward his lady, he had the art to deprive her even of the compassion of the world; and useless and unavailing as that may be while actually possessed by the sufferer, it is, to a mind like Lady Forester's, most painful to know she has it not.

The tattle of society did its best to place the peccant husband above the suffering wife. Some called her a poor spiritless thing, and declared that, with a little of her sister's spirit, she might have brought to reason any Sir Philip whatsoever, were it the termagant Falconbridge himself. But the greater part of their acquaintance affected candor, and saw faults on both sides; though, in fact, there only existed the oppressor and the oppressed. The tone of such critics was—"To be sure, no one will justify Sir Philip Forester, but then we all know Sir Philip, and Jemmie Falconer might have known what she had to expect from the beginning. What made her set her cap at Sir Philip?—He would never have looked at her if she had not thrown herself at his head, with her poor ten thousand pounds. I am sure, if it is money he wanted, she spoiled his market. I know where Sir Philip could have done much better.—And then, if she *would* have the man, could not she try to make him more comfortable at home, and have his friends oftener, and not plague him with the squalling children, and take care all was handsome and in good style about the house? I declare I think Sir Philip would have made a very domestic man, with a woman who knew how to manage him."

Now these fair critics, in raising their profound edifice of domestic felicity, did not recollect that the corner-stone was wanting; and that to receive good company with good cheer, the means of the banquet ought to have been furnished by Sir Philip; whose income (dilapidated as it was) was not equal to the display of hospitality required, and, at the same time, to the supply of the good knight's *menus plaisirs*. So, in spite of all that was so sagely suggested by female friends, Sir Philip carried his good-humor everywhere abroad, and left at home a solitary mansion and a pining spouse.

At length, inconvenienced in his money affairs, and tired even of the short time which he spent in his own dull house, Sir Philip Forester determined to take a trip to the Continent

in the capacity of a volunteer. It was then common for men of fashion to do so ; and our knight perhaps was of opinion that a touch of the military character, just enough to exalt, but not render pedantic, his qualities as a *beau garçon*, was necessary to maintain possession of the elevated situation which he held in the ranks of fashion.

Sir Philip's resolution threw his wife into agonies of terror, by which the worthy baronet was so much annoyed, that, contrary to his wont, he took some trouble to soothe her apprehensions ; and once more brought her to shed tears, in which sorrow was not altogether unmingled with pleasure. Lady Bothwell asked, as a favor, Sir Philip's permission to receive her sister and her family into her own house during his absence on the Continent. Sir Philip readily assented to a proposition which saved expense, silenced the foolish people who might have talked of a deserted wife and family and gratified Lady Bothwell, for whom he felt some respect, as for one who often spoke to him, always with freedom, and sometimes with severity, without being deterred either by his raillery, or the *prestige* of his reputation.

A day or two before Sir Philip's departure, Lady Bothwell took the liberty of asking him, in her sister's presence, the direct question, which his timid wife had often desired, but never ventured, to put to him.

"Pray, Sir Philip, what route do you take when you reach the Continent?"

"I go from Leith to Helvoet by a packet with advices."

"That I comprehend perfectly," said Lady Bothwell dryly ; "but you do not mean to remain long at Helvoet, I presume, and I should like to know what is your next object?"

"You ask me, my dear lady," answered Sir Philip, "a question which I have not dared to ask myself. The answer depends on the fate of war. I shall, of course, go to head-quarters, wherever they may happen to be for the time ; deliver my letters of introduction ; learn as much of the noble art of war as may suffice a poor interloping amateur ; and then take a glance at the sort of thing of which we read so much in the Gazette."

"And I trust, Sir Philip," said Lady Bothwell, "that you will remember that you are a husband and a father ; and that though you think fit to indulge this military fancy, you will not let it hurry you into dangers which it is certainly unnecessary for any save professional persons to encounter."

"Lady Bothwell does me too much honor," replied the adventurous knight, "in regarding such a circumstance with the slightest interest. But to soothe your flattering anxiety, I trust

your ladyship will recollect, that I cannot expose to hazard the venerable and paternal character which you so obligingly recommend to my protection, without putting in some peril an honest fellow, called Philip Forester, with whom I have kept company for thirty years, and with whom, though some folk consider him a coxcomb, I have not the least desire to part."

"Well, Sir Philip, you are the best judge of your own affairs; I have little right to interfere—you are not my husband,"

"God forbid!"—said Sir Philip hastily; instantly adding, however, "God forbid that I should deprive my friend Sir Geoffrey of so inestimable a treasure."

"But you are my sister's husband," replied the lady; "and I suppose you are aware of her present distress of mind"—

"If hearing of nothing else from morning to night can make me aware of it," said Sir Philip, "I should know something of the matter."

"I do not pretend to reply to your wit, Sir Philip," answered Lady Bothwell; "but you must be sensible that all this distress is on account of apprehensions for your personal safety."

"In that case, I am surprised that Lady Bothwell, at least, should give herself so much trouble upon so insignificant a subject."

"My sister's interest may account for my being anxious to learn something of Sir Philip Forester's motions; about which otherwise, I know, he would not wish me to concern myself. I have a brother's safety, too, to be anxious for."

"You mean Major Falconer, your brother by the mother's side:—What can he possibly have to do with our present agreeable conversation?"

"You have had words together, Sir Philip," said Lady Bothwell.

"Naturally; we are connections," replied Sir Philip, "and as such have always had the usual intercourse."

"That is an evasion of the subject," answered the lady. "By words, I mean angry words, on the subject of your usage of your wife."

"If," replied Sir Philip Forester, "you suppose Major Falconer simple enough to intrude his advice upon me, Lady Bothwell, in my domestic matters, you are indeed warranted in believing that I might possibly be so far displeased with the interference, as to request him to reserve his advice till it was asked."

"And, being on these terms, you are going to join the very army in which my brother Falconer is now serving?"

"No man knows the path of honor better than Major Falconer," said Sir Philip. "An aspirant after fame, like me, cannot choose a better guide than his footsteps."

Lady Bothwell rose and went to the window, the tears gushing from her eyes.

"And this heartless railery," she said, "is all the consideration that is to be given to our apprehensions of a quarrel which may bring on the most terrible consequences? Good God! of what can men's hearts be made, who can thus dally with the agony of others?"

Sir Philip Forester was moved; he laid aside the mocking tone in which he had hitherto spoken.

"Dear Lady Bothwell," he said, taking her reluctant hand, "we are both wrong:—you are too deeply serious; I, perhaps, too little so. The dispute I had with Major Falconer was of no earthly consequence. Had anything occurred betwixt us that ought to have been settled *par voie du fait*, as we say in France, neither of us are persons that are likely to postpone such a meeting. Permit me to say, that were it generally known that you or my Lady Forester are apprehensive of such a catastrophe, it might be the very means of bringing about what would not otherwise be likely to happen. I know your good sense, Lady Bothwell, and that you will understand me when I say, that really my affairs require my absence for some months;—this *Jemima* cannot understand; it is a perpetual recurrence of questions, why can you not do this, or that, or the third thing; and, when you have proved to her that her expedients are totally ineffectual, you have just to begin the whole round again. Now, do you tell her, dear Lady Bothwell, that *you* are satisfied. She is, you must confess, one of those persons with whom authority goes further than reasoning. Do but repose a little confidence in me, and you shall see how amply I will repay it."

Lady Bothwell shook her head, as one but half satisfied. "How difficult it is to extend confidence, when the basis on which it ought to rest has been so much shaken! But I will do my best to make *Jemima* easy; and further, I can only say, that for keeping your present purpose, I hold you responsible both to God and man."

"Do not fear that I will deceive you," said Sir Philip; "the safest conveyance to me will be through the general post-office Helvoetsluys, where I will take care to leave orders for forwarding my letters. As for Falconer, our only encounter will

be over a bottle of Burgundy ! so make yourself perfectly easy on his score."

Lady Bothwell could *not* make herself easy ; yet she was sensible that her sister hurt her own cause by *taking on*, as the maid-servants call it, too vehemently ; and by showing before every stranger, by manner, and sometimes by words also, a dissatisfaction with her husband's journey that was sure to come to his ears, and equally certain to displease him. But there was no help for this domestic dissension, which ended only with the day of separation.

I am sorry I cannot tell, with precision, the year in which Sir Philip Forester went over to Flanders ; but it was one of those in which the campaign opened with extraordinary fury ; and many bloody, though indecisive, skirmishes were fought between the French on the one side, and the Allies on the other. In all our modern improvements, there are none, perhaps, greater than in the accuracy and speed with which intelligence is transmitted from any scene of action to those in this country whom it may concern. During Marlborough's campaigns, the sufferings of the many who had relations in, or along with, the army, were greatly augmented by the suspense in which they were detained for weeks, after they had heard of bloody battles, in which, in all probability, those for whom their bosoms throbbed with anxiety had been personally engaged. Amongst those who were most agonized by this state of uncertainty, was the—I had almost said deserted—wife of the gay Sir Philip Forester. A single letter had informed her of his arrival on the Continent—no others were received. One notice occurred in the newspapers, in which Volunteer Sir Philip Forester was mentioned as having been entrusted with a dangerous reconnoissance, which he had executed with the greatest courage, dexterity, and intelligence, and received the thanks of the commanding officer. The sense of his having acquired distinction brought a momentary glow into the lady's pale cheek ; but it was instantly lost in ashen whiteness at the recollection of his danger. After this, they had no news whatever, neither from Sir Philip, nor even from their brother Falconer. The case of Lady Forester was not indeed different from that of hundreds in the same situation ; but a feeble mind is necessarily an irritable one, and the suspense which some bear with constitutional indifference or philosophical resignation, and some with a disposition to believe and hope the best, was intolerable to Lady Forester, at once solitary and sensitive, low-spirited, and devoid of strength of mind, whether natural or acquired.

CHAPTER SECOND.

As she received no further news of Sir Philip, whether directly or indirectly, his unfortunate lady began now to feel a sort of consolation even in those careless habits which had so often given her pain. "He is so thoughtless," she repeated a hundred times a day to her sister, "he never writes when things are going on smoothly; it is his way; had anything happened he would have informed us."

Lady Bothwell listened to her sister without attempting to console her. Probably she might be of opinion, that even the worst intelligence which could be received from Flanders might not be without some touch of consolation; and that the Dowager Lady Forester, if so she was doomed to be called, might have a source of happiness unknown to the wife of the gayest and finest gentleman in Scotland. This conviction became stronger as they learned, from inquiries made at head-quarters, that Sir Philip was no longer with the army; though whether he had been taken or slain in some of those skirmishes which were perpetually occurring, and in which he loved to distinguish himself, or whether he had, for some unknown reason or capricious change of mind, voluntarily left the service, none of his countrymen in the camp of the Allies could form even a conjecture. Meantime his creditors at home became clamorous, entered into possession of his property, and threatened his person, should he be rash enough to return to Scotland. These additional disadvantages aggravated Lady Bothwell's displeasure against the fugitive husband; while her sister saw nothing in any of them, save what tended to increase her grief for the absence of him whom her imagination now represented—as it had before marriage—gallant, gay, and affectionate.

About this period there appeared in Edinburgh a man of singular appearance and pretensions. He was commonly called the Paduan Doctor, from having received his education at that famous university. He was supposed to possess some rare receipts in medicine, with which, it was affirmed, he had wrought remarkable cures. But though, on the one hand, the physicians of Edinburgh termed him an empiric, there were many persons, and among them some of the clergy, who, while they admitted the truth of the cures and the force of his remedies, alleged that Doctor Baptista Damiotti made use of charms and unlawful arts in order to obtain success in his practice. The resort-

ing to him was even solemnly preached against, as a seeking of health from idols, and a trusting to the help which was to come from Egypt. But the protection which the Paduan Doctor received from some friends of interest and consequence enabled him to set these imputations at defiance, and to assume, even in the city of Edinburgh, famed as it was for abhorrence of witches and necromancers, the dangerous character of an expounder of futurity. It was at length rumored that for a certain gratification, which, of course, was not an inconsiderable one, Doctor Baptista Damiotti could tell the fate of the absent, and even show his visitors the personal form of their absent friends, and the action in which they were engaged at the moment. This rumor came to the ears of Lady Forester, who had reached that pitch of mental agony in which the sufferer will do anything, or endure anything, that suspense may be converted into certainty.

Gentle and timid in most cases, her state of mind made her equally obstinate and reckless, and it was with no small surprise and alarm that her sister, Lady Bothwell, heard her express a resolution to visit this man of art, and learn from him the fate of her husband. Lady Bothwell remonstrated on the improbability that such pretensions as those of this foreigner could be founded in anything but imposture.

"I care not," said the deserted wife, "what degree of ridicule I may incur; if there be any one chance out of a hundred that I may obtain some certainty of my husband's fate, I would not miss that chance for whatever else the world can offer me."

Lady Bothwell next urged the unlawfulness of resorting to such sources of forbidden knowledge.

"Sister," replied the sufferer, "he who is dying of thirst cannot refrain from drinking even poisoned water. She who suffers under suspense must seek information, even were the powers which offer it unhallowed and infernal. I go to learn my fate alone; and this very evening will I know it; the sun that rises to-morrow shall find me, if not more happy, at least more resigned."

"Sister," said Lady Bothwell, "if you are determined upon this wild step, you shall not go alone. If this man be an impostor, you may be too much agitated by your feelings to detect his villany. If, which I cannot believe, there be any truth in what he pretends, you shall not be exposed alone to a communication of so extraordinary a nature. I will go with you, if indeed you determine to go. But yet reconsider your project, and renounce inquiries which cannot be prosecuted without guilt, and perhaps without danger."

Lady Forester threw herself into her sister's arms, and clasping her to her bosom, thanked her a hundred times for the offer of her company ; while she declined with a melancholy gesture the friendly advice with which it was accompanied.

When the hour of twilight arrived—which was the period when the Paduan Doctor was understood to receive the visits of those who came to consult with him—the two ladies left their apartments in the Canongate of Edinburgh, having their dress arranged like that of women of an inferior description, and their plaids disposed round their faces as they were worn by the same class : for in those days of aristocracy, the quality of the wearer was generally indicated by the manner in which her plaid was disposed, as well as by the fineness of its texture. It was Lady Bothwell who had suggested this species of disguise partly to avoid observation as they should go to the conjurer's house, and partly in order to make trial of his penetration, by appearing before him in a feigned character. Lady Forester's servants, of tried fidelity, had been employed by her to propitiate the Doctor by a suitable fee, and a story intimating that a soldier's wife desired to know the fate of her husband ; a subject upon which, in all probability, the sage was very frequently consulted.

To the last moment, when the palace clock struck eight, Lady Bothwell earnestly watched her sister, in hopes that she might retreat from her rash undertaking ; but as mildness, and even timidity, is capable at times of vehement and fixed purposes, she found Lady Forester resolutely unmoved and determined when the moment of departure arrived. Ill satisfied with the expedition, but determined not to leave her sister at such a crisis, Lady Bothwell accompanied Lady Forester through more than one obscure street and lane, the servant walking before and acting as their guide. At length he suddenly turned into a narrow court and knocked at an arched door, which seemed to belong to a building of some antiquity. It opened, though no one appeared to act as porter ; and the servant, stepping aside from the entrance, motioned the ladies to enter. They had no sooner done so than it shut and excluded their guide. The two ladies found themselves in a small vestibule, illuminated by a dim lamp, and having, when the door was closed, no communication with the external light or air. The door of an inner apartment, partly open, was at the further side of the vestibule.

"We must not hesitate now, Jemima," said Lady Bothwell, and walked forward into the inner room, where, surrounded by books, maps, philosophical utensils, and other implements of peculiar shape and appearance, they found the man of art.

There was nothing very peculiar in the Italian's appearance. He had the dark complexion and marked features of his country, seemed about fifty years old, and was handsomely, but plainly, dressed in a full suit of black clothes, which was then the universal costume of the medical profession. Large wax-lights, in silver sconces, illuminated the apartment, which was reasonably furnished. He rose as the ladies entered; and, notwithstanding the inferiority of their dress, received them with the marked respect due to their quality, and which foreigners are usually punctilious in rendering to those to whom such honors are due.

Lady Bothwell endeavored to maintain her proposed incognito; and, as the Doctor ushered them to the upper end of the room, made a motion declining his courtesy as unfitted for their condition. "We are poor people, sir," she said; "only my sister's distress has brought us to consult your worship whether"—

He smiled as he interrupted her—"I am aware, madam, of your sister's distress, and its cause; I am aware, also, that I am honored with a visit from two ladies of the highest consideration—Lady Bothwell and Lady Forester. If I could not distinguish them from the class of society which their present dress would indicate, there would be small possibility of my being able to gratify them by giving the information which they come to seek."

"I can easily understand," said Lady Bothwell—

"Pardon my boldness to interrupt you, milady," cried the Italian: "your ladyship was about to say, that you could easily understand that I had got possession of your names by means of your domestic. But in thinking so, you do injustice to the fidelity of your servant, and, I may add, to the skill of one who is also not less your humble servant—Baptista Damiotti."

"I have no intention to do either, sir," said Lady Bothwell, maintaining a tone of composure, though somewhat surprised, "but the situation is something new to me. If you know who we are, you also know, sir, what brought us here."

"Curiosity to know the fate of a Scottish gentleman of rank, now, or lately, upon the Continent," answered the seer; "his name is Il Cavaliere Philipppo Forester; a gentleman who has the honor to be husband to this lady, and, with your ladyship's permission, for using plain language, the misfortune not to value as it deserves that inestimable advantage."

Lady Forester sighed deeply, and Lady Bothwell replied,—

"Since you know our object without our telling it, the only

question that remains is, whether you have the power to relieve my sister's anxiety?"

"I have, madam," answered the Paduan scholar; "but there is still a previous inquiry. Have you the courage to behold with your own eyes what the Cavaliero Philippo Forester is now doing? or will you take it on my report?"

"That question my sister must answer for herself," said Lady Bothwell.

"With my own eyes will I endure to see whatever you have power to show me," said Lady Forester, with the same determined spirit which had stimulated her since her resolution was taken upon this subject.

"There may be danger in it."

"If gold can compensate the risk," said Lady Forester, taking out her purse.

"I do not such things for the purpose of gain," answered the foreigner. "I dare not turn my art to such a purpose. If I take the gold of the wealthy, it is but to bestow it on the poor; nor do I ever accept more than the sum I have already received from your servant. Put up your purse, madam; an adept needs not your gold."

Lady Bothwell, considering this rejection of her sister's offer as a mere trick of an empiric, to induce her to press a larger sum upon him, and willing that the scene should be commenced and ended, offered some gold in turn, observing that it was only to enlarge the sphere of his charity.

"Let Lady Bothwell enlarge the sphere of her own charity," said the Paduan, "not merely in giving of alms, in which I know she is not deficient, but in judging the character of others; and let her oblige Baptista Damiootti by believing him honest, till she shall discover him to be a knave. Do not be surprised, madam, if I speak in answer to your thoughts, rather than your expressions, and tell me once more whether you have courage to look on what I am prepared to show?"

"I own, sir," said Lady Bothwell, "that your words strike me with some sense of fear; but whatever my sister desires to witness, I will not shrink from witnessing along with her."

"Nay, the danger only consists in the risk of your resolution failing you. The sight can only last for the space of seven minutes; and should you interrupt the vision by speaking a single word, not only would the charm be broken, but some danger might result to the spectators. But if you can remain steadily silent for the seven minutes, your curiosity will be gratified without the slightest risk; and for this I will engage my honor."

Internally Lady Bothwell thought the security was but an indifferent one ; but she suppressed the suspicion, as if she had believed that the adept, whose dark features wore a half-formed smile, could in reality read even her most secret reflections. A solemn pause then ensued, until Lady Forester gathered courage enough to reply to the physician, as he termed himself, that she would abide with firmness and silence the sight which he had promised to exhibit to them. Upon this, he made them a low obeisance, and saying he went to prepare matters to meet their wish, left the apartment. The two sisters, hand in hand, as if seeking by that close union to divert any danger which might threaten them, sat down in two seats in immediate contact with each other ; Jemima seeking support in the manly and habitual courage of Lady Bothwell ; and she, on the other hand, more agitated than she had expected, endeavoring to fortify herself by the desperate resolution which circumstances had forced her sister to assume. The one perhaps said to herself, that her sister never feared anything ; and the other might reflect, that what so feeble a minded woman as Jemima did not fear, could not properly be a subject of apprehension to a person of firmness and resolution like herself.

In a few moments the thoughts of both were diverted from their own situation, by a strain of music so singularly sweet and solemn, that, while it seemed calculated to divert or dispel any feeling unconnected with its harmony, increased, at the same time, the solemn excitation which the preceding interview was calculated to produce. The music was that of some instrument with which they were unacquainted ; but circumstances afterward led my ancestress to believe that it was that of the harmonica, which she heard at a much later period in life.

When these heaven-born sounds had ceased, a door opened in the upper end of the apartment, and they saw Damiotti, standing at the head of two or three steps, sign to them to advance. His dress was so different from that which he had worn a few minutes before, that they could hardly recognize him ; and the deadly paleness of his countenance, and a certain stern rigidity of muscles, like that of one whose mind is made up to some strange and daring action, had totally changed the somewhat sarcastic expression with which he had previously regarded them both, and particularly Lady Bothwell. He was barefooted, excepting a species of sandals in the antique fashion ; his legs were naked beneath the knees ; above them he wore hose, and a doublet of dark crimson silk close to his body ; and over that a flowing loose robe, something resembling a surplice, of snow-white linen ; his throat and neck were uncovered, and

his long, straight, black hair, was carefully combed down at full length.

As the ladies approached at his bidding, he showed no gesture of that ceremonious courtesy of which he had been formerly lavish. On the contrary, he made the signal of advance with an air of command; and when, arm in arm, and with insecure steps, the sisters approached the spot where he stood, it was with a warning frown that he pressed his finger to his lips, as if reiterating his condition of absolute silence, while, stalking before them, he led the way into the next apartment.

This was a large room, hung with black, as if for a funeral. At the upper end was a table, or rather a species of altar, covered with the same lugubrious color, on which lay divers objects resembling the usual implements of sorcery. These objects were not indeed visible as they advanced into the apartment; for the light which displayed them, being only that of two expiring lamps, was extremely faint. The master—to use the Italian phrase for persons of this description—approached the upper end of the room with a genuflection like that of a Catholic to the crucifix, and at the same time crossed himself. The ladies followed in silence, and arm in arm. Two or three low broad steps led to a platform in front of the altar, or what resembled such. Here the sage took his stand, and placed the ladies beside him, once more earnestly repeating by signs his injunctions of silence. The Italian then, extending his bare arm from under his linen vestment, pointed with his forefinger to five large flambeaux, or torches, placed on each side of the altar. They took fire successively at the approach of his hand, or rather of his finger, and spread a strong light through the room. By this the visitors could discern that, on the seeming altar, were disposed two naked swords laid crosswise; a large open book, which they conceived to be a copy of the Holy Scriptures, but in a language to them unknown; and beside this mysterious volume was placed a human skull. But what struck the sisters most was a very tall and broad mirror, which occupied all the space behind the altar, and, illumined by the lighted torches, reflected the mysterious articles which were laid upon it.

The master then placed himself between the two ladies, and, pointing to the mirror, took each by the hand, but without speaking a syllable. They gazed instantly on the polished and sable space to which he had directed their attention. Suddenly the surface assumed a new and singular appearance. It no longer simply reflected the objects placed before it, but, as if it had self-contained scenery of its own, objects began to

appear within it, at first in a disorderly, indistinct, and miscellaneous manner, like form arranging itself out of chaos; at length, in distinct and defined shape and symmetry. It was thus that, after some shifting of light and darkness over the face of the wonderful glass, a long perspective of arches and columns began to arrange itself on its sides, and a vaulted roof on the upper part of it; till, after many oscillations, the whole vision gained a fixed and stationary appearance representing the interior of a foreign church. The pillars were stately, and hung with scutcheons; the arches were lofty and magnificent; the floor was lettered with funeral inscriptions. But there were no separate shrines, no images, no display of chalice or crucifix on the altar. It was, therefore, a Protestant church upon the Continent. A clergyman, dressed in the Geneva gown and band, stood by the communion-table, and, with the Bible opened before him, and his clerk awaiting in the background, seemed prepared to perform some service of the church to which he belonged.

At length there entered the middle aisle of the building a numerous party, which appeared to be a bridal one, as a lady and gentleman walked first, hand in hand, followed by a large concourse of persons of both sexes, gayly, nay richly, attired. The bride, whose features they could distinctly see, seemed not more than sixteen years old, and extremely beautiful. The bridegroom, for some seconds, moved rather with his shoulder toward them, and his face averted; but his elegance of form and step struck the sisters at once with the same apprehension. As he turned his face suddenly, it was frightfully realized, and they saw, in the gay bridegroom before them, Sir Philip Forester. His wife uttered an imperfect exclamation, at the sound of which the whole scene stirred and seemed to separate.

"I could compare it to nothing," said Lady Bothwell, while recounting the wonderful tale, "but to the dispersion of the reflection offered by a deep and calm pool, when a stone is suddenly cast into it, and the shadows become dissipated and broken." The master pressed both the ladies' hands severely, as if to remind them of their promise, and of the danger which they incurred. The exclamation died away on Lady Forester's tongue, without attaining perfect utterance, and the scene in the glass, after the fluctuation of a minute, again resumed to the eye its former appearance of a real scene, existing within the mirror, as if represented in a picture, save the figures were movable instead of being stationary.

The representation of Sir Philip Forester, now distinctly

visible in form and feature, was seen to lead on toward the clergyman that beautiful girl, who advanced at once with diffidence, and with a species of affectionate pride. In the meantime, and just as the clergyman had arranged the bridal company before him, and seemed about to commence the service, another group of persons, of whom two or three were officers, entered the church. They moved, at first, forward as though they came to witness the bridal ceremony, but suddenly one of the officers, whose back was toward the spectators, detached himself from his companions, and rushed hastily toward the marriage party, when the whole of them turned toward him, as if attracted by some exclamation which had accompanied his advance. Suddenly the intruder drew his sword; the bridegroom unsheathed his own, and made toward him; swords were also drawn by other individuals, both of the marriage party, and of those who had last entered. They fell into a sort of confusion, the clergyman, and some elder and graver persons, laboring apparently to keep the peace, while the hotter spirits on both sides brandished their weapons. But now the period of brief space during which the soothsayer, as he pretended, was permitted to exhibit his art, was arrived. The fumes again mixed together, and dissolved gradually from observation; the vaults and columns of the church rolled asunder, and disappeared; and the front of the mirror reflected nothing save the blazing torches, and the melancholy apparatus placed on the altar or table before it.

The doctor led the ladies, who greatly required his support, into the apartment from whence they came; where wine, essences, and other means of restoring suspended animation, had been provided during his absence. He motioned them to chairs, which they occupied in silence; Lady Forester, in particular, wringing her hands, and casting her eyes up to heaven, but without speaking a word, as if the spell had been still before her eyes.

"And what we have seen is even now acting?" said Lady Bothwell, collecting herself with difficulty.

"That," answered Baptista Damiotti, "I cannot justly, or with certainty, say. But it is either now acting, or has been acted during a short space before this. It is the last remarkable transaction in which the Cavalier Forester has been engaged."

Lady Bothwell then expressed anxiety concerning her sister, whose altered countenance, and apparent unconsciousness of what passed around her, excited her apprehensions how it might be possible to convey her home.

"I have prepared for that," answered the adept; "I have

directed the servant to bring your equipage as near to this place as the narrowness of the street will permit. Fear not for your sister; but give her, when you return home, this composing draught, and she will be better to-morrow morning. Few," he added, in a melancholy tone, "leave this house as well in health as they entered it. Such being the consequence of seeking knowledge by mysterious means, I leave you to judge the condition of those who have the power of gratifying such irregular curiosity. Farewell, and forget not the potion."

"I will give her nothing that comes from you," said Lady Bothwell; "I have seen enough of your art already. Perhaps you would poison us both to conceal your own necromancy. But we are persons who want neither the means of making our wrongs known, nor the assistance of friends to right them."

"You have had no wrongs from me, madam," said the adept. "You sought one who is little grateful for such honor. He seeks no one, and only gives responses to those who invite and call upon him. After all, you have but learned a little sooner the evil which you must still be doomed to endure. I hear your servant's step at the door, and will detain your ladyship and Lady Forester no longer. The next packet from the Continent will explain what you have already partly witnessed. Let it not, if I may advise, pass too suddenly into your sister's hands."

So saying, he bid Lady Bothwell good-night. She went, lighted by the adept, to the vestibule, where he hastily threw a black cloak over his singular dress, and opening the door, intrusted his visitors to the care of the servant. It was with difficulty that Lady Bothwell sustained her sister to the carriage, though it was only twenty steps distant. When they arrived at home, Lady Forester required medical assistance. The physician of the family attended, and shook his head on feeling her pulse.

"Here has been," he said, "a violent and sudden shock on the nerves. I must know how it has happened."

Lady Bothwell admitted they had visited the conjuror, and that Lady Forester had received some bad news respecting her husband, Sir Philip.

"That rascally quack would make my fortune were he to stay in Edinburgh," said the graduate; "this is the seventh nervous case I have heard of his making for me, and all by effect of terror." He next examined the composing draught which Lady Bothwell had unconsciously brought in her hand, tasted it, and pronounced it very germane to the matter, and what would save an application to the apothecary. He then

paused, and looking at Lady Bothwell very significantly, at length added, "I suppose I must not ask your ladyship anything about this Italian warlock's proceedings?"

"Indeed, Doctor," answered Lady Bothwell, "I consider what passed as confidential; and though the man may be a rogue, yet, as we were fools enough to consult him, we should, I think, be honest enough to keep his counsel."

"*May* be a knave—come," said the Doctor, "I am glad to hear your ladyship allows such a possibility in anything that comes from Italy."

"What comes from Italy may be as good as what comes from Hanover, Doctor. But you and I will remain good friends, and that it may be so, we will say nothing of Whig and Tory."

"Not I," said the Doctor, receiving his fee, and taking his hat; "a Carolus serves my purpose as well as a Willielmus. But I should like to know why old Lady Saint Ringan's, and all that set, go about wasting their decayed lungs in puffing this foreign fellow."

"Ay—you had best set him down a Jesuit, as Scrub says." On these terms they parted.

The poor patient—whose nerves, from an extraordinary state of tension, had at length become relaxed in as extraordinary a degree—continued to struggle with a sort of imbecility, the growth of superstitious terror, when the shocking tidings were brought from Holland, which fulfilled even her worst expectations.

They were sent by the celebrated Earl of Stair, and contained the melancholy event of a duel betwixt Sir Philip Forester and his wife's half-brother, Captain Falconer, of the Scotch-Dutch, as they were then called, in which the latter had been killed. The cause of quarrel rendered the incident still more shocking. It seemed that Sir Philip had left the army suddenly, in consequence of being unable to pay a very considerable sum, which he had lost to another volunteer at play. He had changed his name, and taken up his residence at Rotterdam, where he had insinuated himself into the good graces of an ancient and rich burgomaster, and by his handsome person and graceful manners, captivated the affections of his only child, a very young person of great beauty, and the heiress of much wealth. Delighted with the specious attractions of his proposed son-in-law, the wealthy merchant—whose idea of the British character was too high to admit of his taking any precaution to acquire evidence of his condition and circumstances—gave his consent to the marriage. It was about

to be celebrated in the principal church of the city, when it was interrupted by a singular occurrence.

Captain Falconer having been detached to Rotterdam to bring up a part of the brigade of Scottish auxiliaries, who were in quarters there, a person of consideration in the town, to whom he had been formerly known, proposed to him for amusement to go to the high church, to see a countryman of his own married to the daughter of a wealthy burgomaster. Captain Falconer went accordingly, accompanied by his Dutch acquaintance with a party of his friends, and two or three officers of the Scotch brigade. His astonishment may be conceived when he saw his own brother-in-law, a married man, on the point of leading to the altar the innocent and beautiful creature, upon whom he was about to practice a base and unmanly deceit. He proclaimed his villainy on the spot, and the marriage was interrupted of course. But, against the opinion of more thinking men, who considered Sir Philip Forester as having thrown himself out of the rank of men of honor, Captain Falconer admitted him to the privilege of such, accepted a challenge from him, and in the rencounter received a mortal wound. Such are the ways of Heaven, mysterious in our eyes. Lady Forester never recovered the shock of this dismal intelligence.

"And did this tragedy," said I, "take place exactly at the time when the scene in the mirror was exhibited?"

"It is hard to be obliged to maim one's story," answered my aunt; "but, to speak the truth, it happened some days sooner than the apparition was exhibited."

"And so there remained a possibility," said I, "that by some secret and speedy communication the artist might have received early intelligence of that incident."

"The incredulous pretended so," replied my aunt.

"What became of the adept?" demanded I.

"Why, a warrant came down shortly afterward to arrest him for high treason, as an agent of the Chevalier St. George; and Lady Bothwell, recollecting the hints which had escaped the Doctor, an ardent friend of the Protestant succession, did then call to remembrance that this man was chiefly *prône* among the ancient matrons of her own political persuasion. It certainly seemed probable that intelligence from the Continent, which could easily have been transmitted by an active and powerful agent, might have enabled him to prepare such a scene of phantasmagoria as she had herself witnessed. Yet

there were so many difficulties in assigning a natural explanation, that, to the day of her death, she remained in great doubt on the subject, and much disposed to cut the Gordian knot, by admitting the existence of supernatural agency."

"But, my dear aunt," said I, "what became of the man of skill?"

"Oh, he was too good a fortune-teller not to be able to foresee that his own destiny would be tragical if he waited the arrival of the man with the silver greyhound upon his sleeve. He made, as we say, a moonlight flitting, and was nowhere to be seen or heard of. Some noise there was about papers or letters found in the house, but it died away, and Doctor Baptista Damiotti was soon as little talked of as Galen or Hippocrates."

"And Sir Philip Forester," said I, "did he too vanish forever from the public scene?"

"No," replied my kind informer. "He was heard of once more, and it was upon a remarkable occasion. It is said that we Scots, when there was such a nation in existence, have, among our full peck of virtues, one or two little barleycorns of vice. In particular, it is alleged that we rarely forgive, and never forget, any injuries received; that we used to make an idol of our resentment, as poor Lady Constance did of her grief; and are addicted, as Burns says, to 'nursing our wrath to keep it warm.' Lady Bothwell was not without this feeling; and, I believe, nothing whatever, scarce the restoration of the Stuart line, could have happened so delicious to her feelings as an opportunity of being revenged on Sir Philip Forester, for the deep and double injury which had deprived her of a sister and of a brother. But nothing of him was heard or known till many a year had passed away."

At length—it was on a Fastern's E'en (Shrovetide) assembly at which the whole fashion of Edinburgh attended, full and frequent, and when Lady Bothwell had a seat amongst the lady patronesses, that one of the attendants on the company whispered into her ear, that a gentleman wished to speak with her in private.

"In private? and in an assembly-room?—he must be mad—Tell him to call upon me to-morrow morning."

"I said so, my lady," answered the man; "but he desired me to give you this paper."

She undid the billet, which was curiously folded and sealed. It only bore the words, "*On business of life and death*," written in a hand which she had never seen before. Suddenly it occurred to her, that it might concern the safety of some of her political

friends ; she therefore followed the messenger to a small apartment where the refreshments were prepared, and from which the general company was excluded. She found an old man, who, at her approach, rose up and bowed profoundly. His appearance indicated a broken constitution ; and his dress, though sedulously rendered conforming to the etiquette of a ball-room, was worn and tarnished, and hung in folds about his emaciated person. Lady Bothwell was about to feel for her purse, expecting to get rid of the suppliant at the expense of a little money, but some fear of a mistake arrested her purpose. She therefore gave the man leisure to explain himself.

" I have the honor to speak with the Lady Bothwell ? "

" I am Lady Bothwell ; allow me to say, that this is **no time** or place for long explanations.—What are your commands with me ? "

" Your ladyship," said the old man, " had once a sister."

" True ; whom I loved as my own soul."

" And a brother."

" The bravest, the kindest, the most affectionate ! " said Lady Bothwell.

" Both these beloved relatives you lost by the fault of an unfortunate man," continued the stranger.

" By the crimes of an unnatural, bloody-minded murderer," said the lady.

" I am answered," replied the old man, bowing, as if to withdraw.

" Stop, sir, I command you," said Lady Bothwell.—" Who are you, that, at such a place and time, come to recall these horrible recollections ? I insist upon knowing."

" I am one who intends Lady Bothwell no injury ; but, on the contrary, to offer her the means of doing a deed of Christian charity, which the world would wonder at, and which Heaven would reward ; but I find her in no temper for such a sacrifice as I was prepared to ask."

" Speak out, sir ; what is your meaning ? " said Lady Bothwell.

" The wretch that has wronged you so deeply," rejoined the stranger, " is now on his death-bed. His days have been days of misery, his nights have been sleepless hours of anguish—yet he cannot die without your forgiveness. His life has been an unremitting penance—yet he dares not part from his burden while your curses load his soul."

" Tell him," said Lady Bothwell, sternly, " to ask pardon of that Being whom he has so greatly offended ; not of an erring mortal like himself. What could my forgiveness avail him ? "

"Much," answered the old man. "It will be an earnest of that which he may then venture to ask from his Creator, lady, and from yours. Remember, Lady Bothwell, you too have a death-bed to look forward to; your soul may, all human souls must, feel the awe of facing the judgment-seat, with the wounds of an untented conscience, raw, and rankling—what thought would it be then that should whisper, 'I have given no mercy, how then shall I ask it?' "

"Man, whosoever thou may'st be," replied Lady Bothwell, "urge me not so cruelly. It would be but blasphemous hypocrisy to utter with my lips the words which every throb of my heart protests against. They would open the earth and give to light the wasted form of my sister—the bloody form of my murdered brother—forgive him?—Never, never!"

"Great God!" cried the old man, holding up his hands, "is it thus the worms which thou hast called out of dust obey the commands of their Maker? Farewell, proud and unforbearing woman. Exult that thou hast added to a death in want and pain the agonies of religious despair; but never again mock Heaven by petitioning for the pardon which thou hast refused to grant."

He was turning from her.

"Stop," she exclaimed; "I will try; yes, I will try to pardon him."

"Gracious lady," said the old man, "you will relieve the over-burdened soul, which dare not sever itself from its sinful companion of earth without being at peace with you. What do I know—your forgiveness may perhaps preserve for penitence the dregs of a wretched life."

"Ha!" said the lady, as a sudden light broke on her, "it is the villain himself!" And grasping Sir Philip Forester—for it was he, and no other—by the collar, she raised a cry of "Murder, murder! Seize the murderer!"

At an exclamation so singular, in such a place, the company thronged into the apartment, but Sir Philip Forester was no longer there. He had forcibly extricated himself from Lady Bothwell's hold, and had run out of the apartment which opened on the landing-place of the stair. There seemed no escape in that direction, for there were several persons coming up the steps, and others descending. But the unfortunate man was desperate. He threw himself over the balustrade, and alighted safely in the lobby, though a leap of fifteen feet at least, then dashed into the street, and was lost in darkness. Some of the Bothwell family made pursuit, and, had they come up with the fugitive, they might have perhaps slain him; for in

those days men's blood ran warm in their veins. But the police did not interfere ; the matter most criminal having happened long since, and in a foreign land. Indeed, it was always thought, that this extraordinary scene originated in a hypocritical experiment, by which Sir Philip desired to ascertain whether he might return to his native country in safety from the resentment of a family which he had injured so deeply. As the result fell out so contrary to his wishes, he is believed to have returned to the Continent, and there died in exile.

So closed the tale of the MYSTERIOUS MIRROR.

THE TAPESTRIED CHAMBER;

OR,

THE LADY IN THE SACQUE.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS is another little story from the Keepsake of 1828. It was told to me many years ago, by the late Miss Anna Seward, who, among other accomplishments that rendered her an amusing inmate in a country house, had that of recounting narratives of this sort with very considerable effect; much greater, indeed, than any one would be apt to guess from the style of her written performances. There are hours and moods when most people are not displeased to listen to such things; and I have heard some of the greatest and wisest of my contemporaries take their share in telling them.

August 1831.

THE following narrative is given from the pen, so far as memory permits, in the same character in which it was presented to the author's ear; nor has he claim to further praise, or to be more deeply censured, than in proportion to the good or bad judgment which he has employed in selecting his materials, as he has studiously avoided any attempt at ornament, which might interfere with the simplicity of the tale.

At the same time, it must be admitted, that the particular class of stories which turns on the marvelous, possesses a stronger influence when told than when committed to print. The volume taken up at noonday, though rehearsing the same incidents, conveys a much more feeble impression than is achieved by the voice of the speaker on a circle of fireside auditors, who hang upon the narrative as the narrator details the minute incidents which serve to give it authenticity, and

lowers his voice with an affectation of mystery while he approaches the fearful and wonderful part. It was with such advantages that the present writer heard the following events related, more than twenty years since, by the celebrated Miss Seward, of Litchfield, who to her numerous accomplishments, added, in a remarkable degree, the power of narrative in private conversation. In its present form, the tale must necessarily lose all the interest which was attached to it by the flexible voice and intelligent features of the gifted narrator. Yet still, read aloud, to an undoubting audience by the doubtful light of the closing evening, or in silence, by the decaying taper, and amidst the solitude of a half-lighted apartment, it may redeem its character as a good ghost story. Miss Seward always affirmed that she had derived her information from an authentic source, although she suppressed the names of the two persons chiefly concerned. I will not avail myself of any particulars I may have since received concerning the localities of the detail, but suffer them to rest under the same general description in which they were first related to me; and, for the same reason, I will not add to or diminish the narrative, by any circumstances, whether more or less material, but simply rehearse, as I heard it, a story of supernatural terror.

About the end of the American war, when the officers of Lord Cornwallis's army, which surrendered at Yorktown, and others, who had been made prisoners during the impolitic and ill-fated controversy, were returning to their own country, to relate their adventures, and repose themselves after their fatigues; there was amongst them a general officer, to whom Miss S. gave the name of Browne, but merely, as I understood, to save the inconvenience of introducing a nameless agent in the narrative. He was an officer of merit, as well as a gentleman of high consideration for family and attainments.

Some business had carried General Browne upon a tour through the western counties, when, in the conclusion of a morning stage, he found himself in the vicinity of a small country town, which presented a scene of uncommon beauty, and of a character peculiarly English.

The little town, with its stately old church, whose tower bore testimony to the devotion of ages long past, lay amidst pasture and corn-fields of small extent, but bounded and divided with hedge-row timber of great age and size. There were few marks of modern improvement. The environs of the place intimated neither the solitude of decay, nor the bustle of novelty; the houses were old, but in good repair; and the beautiful little

river murmured freely on its way to the left of the town, neither restrained by a dam, nor bordered by a towing-path.

Upon a gentle eminence, nearly a mile to the southward of the town, were seen, amongst many venerable oaks and tangled thickets, the turrets of a castle, as old as the wars of York and Lancaster, but which seemed to have received important alterations during the age of Elizabeth and her successors. It had not been a place of great size; but whatever accommodation it formerly afforded, was, it must be supposed, still to be obtained within its walls; at least, such was the inference which General Browne drew from observing the smoke arise merrily from several of the ancient wreathed and carved chimney-stalks. The wall of the park ran alongside of the highway for two or three hundred yards; and through the different points by which the eye found glimpses into the woodland scenery, it seemed to be well stocked. Other points of view opened in succession; now a full one, of the front of the old castle, and now a side glimpse at its particular towers; the former rich in all the bizarrerie of the Elizabethan school, while the simple and solid strength of other parts of the building seemed to show that they had been raised more for defence than ostentation.

Delighted with the partial glimpses which he obtained of the castle through the woods and glades by which this ancient feudal fortress was surrounded, our military traveler was determined to inquire whether it might not deserve a nearer view, and whether it contained family pictures or other objects of curiosity worthy of a stranger's visit; when, leaving the vicinity of the park, he rolled through a clean and well-paved street, and stopped at the door of a well-frequented inn.

Before ordering horses to proceed on his journey, General Browne made inquiries concerning the proprietor of the chateau which had so attracted his admiration, and was equally surprised and pleased at hearing in reply a nobleman named whom we shall call Lord Woodville. How fortunate! Much of Browne's early recollections, both at school and at college, had been connected with young Woodville, whom, by a few questions, he now ascertained to be the same with the owner of this fair domain. He had been raised to the peerage by the decease of his father a few months before, and as the General learned from the landlord, the term of mourning being ended, was now taking possession of his paternal estate, in the jovial season of merry autumn, accompanied by a select party of friends to enjoy the sports of a country famous for game.

This was delightful news to our traveler. Frank Woodville had been Richard Browne's fag at Eton, and his chosen inti-

mate at Christ Church; their pleasures and their tasks had been the same; and the honest soldier's heart warmed to find his early friend in possession of so delightful a residence, and of an estate, as the landlord assured him with a nod and a wink, fully adequate to maintain and add to his dignity. Nothing was more natural than that the traveler should suspend a journey, which there was nothing to render hurried, to pay a visit to an old friend under such agreeable circumstances.

The fresh horses, therefore, had only the brief task of conveying the General's traveling carriage to Woodville Castle. A porter admitted them at a modern Gothic lodge, built in that style to correspond with the Castle itself, and at the same time rang a bell to give warning of the approach of visitors. Apparently the sound of the bell had suspended the separation of the company, bent on the various amusements of the morning; for, on entering the court of the chateau, several young men were lounging about in their sporting dresses, looking at, and criticising, the dogs which the keepers held in readiness to attend their pastime. As General Browne alighted, the young lord came to the gate of the hall, and for an instant gazed, as at a stranger, upon the countenance of his friend, on which war, with its fatigues and its wounds, had made a great alteration. But the uncertainty lasted no longer than till the visitor had spoken, and the hearty greeting which followed was such as can only be exchanged betwixt those who have passed together the merry days of careless boyhood or early youth.

"If I could have formed a wish, my dear Browne," said Lord Woodville, "it would have been to have you here, of all men, upon this occasion, which my friends are good enough to hold as a sort of holiday. Do not think you have been unwatched during the years you have been absent from us. I have traced you through your dangers, your triumphs, your misfortunes, and was delighted to see that, whether in victory or defeat, the name of my old friend was always distinguished with applause."

The General made a suitable reply, and congratulated his friend on his new dignities, and the possession of a place and domain so beautiful.

"Nay, you have seen nothing of it as yet," said Lord Woodville, "and I trust you do not mean to leave us till you are better acquainted with it. It is true, I confess, that my present party is pretty large, and the old house, like other places of the kind, does not possess so much accommodation as the extent of the outward walls appears to promise. But we can give you

a comfortable old-fashioned room ; and I venture to suppose that your campaigns have taught you to be glad of worse quarters."

The General shrugged his shoulders, and laughed. " I presume," he said, " the worst apartment in your chateau is considerably superior to the old tobacco-cask, in which I was fain to take up my night's lodging when I was in the Bush, as the Virginians call it, with the light corps. There I lay, like Diogenes himself, so delighted with my covering from the elements, that I made a vain attempt to have it rolled on to my next quarters ; but my commander for the time would give way to no such luxurious provision, and I took farewell of my beloved cask with tears in my eyes."

" Well, then, since you do not fear your quarters," said Lord Woodville, " you will stay with me a week at least. Of guns, dogs, fishing rods, flies, and means of sport by sea and land, we have enough and to spare : you cannot pitch on an amusement, but we will pitch on the means of pursuing it. But if you prefer the gun and pointers, I will go with you myself, and see whether you have mended your shooting since you have been amongst the Indians of the back settlements."

The General gladly accepted his friendly host's proposal in all its points. After a morning of manly exercise, the company met at dinner, where it was the delight of Lord Woodville to conduce to the display of the high properties of his recovered friend, so as to recommend him to his guests, most of whom were persons of distinction. He led General Browne to speak of the scenes he had witnessed ; and as every word marked alike the brave officer and the sensible man, who retained possession of his cool judgment under the most imminent dangers, the company looked upon the soldier with general respect, as on one who had proved himself possessed of an uncommon portion of personal courage—that attribute, of all other which every body desires to be thought possessed.

The day at Woodville Castle ended as usual in such mansions. The hospitality stopped within the limits of good order ; music, in which the young lord was a proficient, succeeded to the circulation of the bottle : cards and billiards, for those who preferred such amusements, were in readiness : but the exercise of the morning required early hours, and not long after eleven o'clock the guests began to retire to their several apartments.

The young lord himself conducted his friend, General Browne, to the chamber destined for him, which answered the description he had given of it, being comfortable, but old-fashioned. The bed was of the massive form used in the end of the seven

teenth century, and the curtains of faded silk, heavily trimmed with tarnished gold. But then the sheets, pillows, and blankets looked delightful to the campaigner, when he thought of his mansion, the cask. There was an air of gloom in the tapestry hangings, which, with their worn-out graces, curtained the walls of the little chamber, and gently undulated as the autumnal breeze found its way through the ancient lattice-window, which pattered and whistled as the air gained entrance. The toilet too, with its mirror, turbaned, after the manner of the beginning of the century, with a coiffure of murrey-colored silk, and its hundred strange-shaped boxes, providing for arrangements which had been obsolete for more than fifty years, had an antique, and in so far a melancholy, aspect. But nothing could blaze more brightly and cheerfully than the two large wax candles; or if aught could rival them, it was the flaming bickering fagots in the chimney, that sent at once their gleam and their warmth through the snug apartment; which, notwithstanding the general antiquity of its appearance, was not wanting in the least convenience that modern habits rendered either necessary or desirable.

"This is an old-fashioned sleeping apartment, General," said the young lord; "but I hope you will find nothing that makes you envy your old tobacco-cask."

"I am not particular respecting my lodgings," replied the General; "yet, were I to make any choice, I would prefer this chamber by many degrees, to the gayer and more modern rooms of your family mansion. Believe me, that when I unite its modern air of comfort with its venerable antiquity, and recollect that it is your lordship's property, I shall feel in better quarters here, than if I were in the best hotel London could afford."

"I trust—I have no doubt—that you will find yourself as comfortable as I wish you, my dear General," said the young nobleman; and once more bidding his guest good-night, he shook him by the hand and withdrew.

The General again looked round him, and internally congratulating himself on his return to peaceful life, the comforts of which were endeared by the recollection of the hardships and dangers he had lately sustained, undressed himself, and prepared himself for a luxurious night's rest.

Here contrary to the custom of this species of tale, we leave the General in possession of his apartment until the next morning.

The company assembled for breakfast at an early hour, but without the appearance of General Browne, who seemed the

guest that Lord Woodville was desirous of honoring above all whom his hospitality had assembled around him. He more than once expressed surprise at the General's absence, and at length sent a servant to make inquiry after him. The man brought back information that General Browne had been walking abroad since an early hour of the morning, in defiance of the weather, which was misty and ungenial.

"The custom of a soldier,"—said the young nobleman to his friends; "many of them acquire habitual vigilance, and cannot sleep after the early hour at which their duty usually commands them to be alert."

Yet the explanation which Lord Woodville thus offered to the company seemed hardly satisfactory to his own mind, and it was in a fit of silence and abstraction that he awaited the return of the General. It took place near an hour after the breakfast-bell had rung. He looked fatigued and feverish. His hair, the powdering and arrangement of which was at this time one of the most important occupations of a man's whole day, and marked his fashion as much as, in the present time, the tying of a cravat, or the want of one, was disheveled, uncurled, void of powder, and dank with dew. His clothes were huddled on with a careless negligence, remarkable in a military man, whose real or supposed duties are usually held to include some attention to the toilet; and his looks were haggard and ghastly in a peculiar degree.

"So you have stolen a march upon us this morning, my dear General," said Lord Woodville; "or you have not found your bed so much to your mind as I had hoped and you seemed to expect. How did you rest last night?"

"Oh, excellently well! remarkably well! never better in my life"—said General Browne rapidly, and yet with an air of embarrassment which was obvious to his friend. He then hastily swallowed a cup of tea, and, neglecting or refusing whatever else was offered, seemed to fall into a fit of abstraction.

"You will take the gun to-day, General;" said his friend and host, but had to repeat the question twice ere he received the abrupt answer, "No, my lord; I am sorry I cannot have the honor of spending another day with your lordship; my post horses are ordered, and will be here directly."

All who were present showed surprise, and Lord Woodville immediately replied, "Post horses, my good friend! what can you possibly want with them, when you promised to stay with me quietly for at least a week?"

"I believe," said the General, obviously much embarrassed,

"that I might, in the pleasure of my first meeting with your lordship, have said something about stopping here a few days; but I have since found it altogether impossible."

"That is very extraordinary," answered the young nobleman. "You seemed quite disengaged yesterday, and you cannot have had a summons to-day; for our post has not come up from the town, and therefore you cannot have received any letters."

General Browne, without giving any further explanation, muttered something of indispensable business, and insisted on the absolute necessity of his departure in a manner which silenced all opposition on the part of his host, who saw that his resolution was taken, and forebore further importunity.

"At least, however," he said, "permit me, my dear Browne, since you will or must, to show you the view from the terrace, which the mist, that is now rising, will soon display."

He threw open a sash window, and stepped down upon the terrace as he spoke. The General followed him mechanically, but seemed little to attend to what his host was saying, as, looking across an extended and rich prospect, he pointed out the different objects worthy of observation. Thus they moved on till Lord Woodville had attained his purpose of drawing his guest entirely apart from the rest of the company, when, turning round upon him with an air of great solemnity, he addressed him thus:—

"Richard Browne, my old and very dear friend, we are now alone. Let me conjure you to answer me upon the word of a friend, and the honor of a soldier. How did you in reality rest during last night?"

"Most wretchedly indeed, my lord," answered the General in the same tone of solemnity;—"so miserably, that I would not run the risk of such a second night, not only for all the lands belonging to this castle, but for all the country which I see from this elevated point of view."

"This is most extraordinary," said the young lord, as if speaking to himself; "then there must be something in the reports concerning that apartment." Again turning to the General, he said, "For God's sake, my dear friend, be candid with me, and let me know the disagreeable particulars, which have befallen you under a roof, where, with consent of the owner, you should have met nothing save comfort."

The General seemed distressed by this appeal, and paused a moment before he replied. "My dear lord," he at length said, "what happened to me last night is of a nature so peculiar and so unpleasant, that I could hardly bring myself to detail it even

to your lordship, were it not that, independent of my wish to gratify any request of yours, I think that sincerity on my part may lead to some explanation about a circumstance equally painful and mysterious. To others, the communication I am about to make, might place me in the light of a weak-minded, superstitious fool, who suffered his own imagination to delude and bewilder him ; but you have known me in childhood and youth, and will not suspect me of having adopted in manhood the feelings and frailties from which my early years were free." Here he paused, and his friend replied :—

"Do not doubt my perfect confidence in the truth of your communication, however strange it may be," replied Lord Woodville ; "I know your firmness of disposition too well, to suspect you could be made the object of imposition, and am aware that your honor and your friendship will equally deter you from exaggerating whatever you may have witnessed."

"Well then," said the General, "I will proceed with my story as well as I can, relying upon your candor ; and yet distinctly feeling that I would rather face a battery than recall to my mind the odious recollections of last night."

He paused a second time, and then perceiving that Lord Woodville remained silent and in an attitude of attention, he commenced though not without obvious reluctance, the history of his night's adventures in the Tapestried Chamber.

"I undressed and went to bed, so soon as your lordship left me yesterday evening ; but the wood in the chimney, which nearly fronted my bed, blazed brightly and cheerfully, and, aided by a hundred exciting recollections of my childhood and youth which had been recalled by the unexpected pleasure of meeting your lordship, prevented me from falling immediately asleep. I ought, however, to say, that these reflections were all of a pleasant and agreeable kind, grounded on a sense of having for a time exchanged the labor, fatigues, and dangers of my profession, for the enjoyment of a peaceful life, and the reunion of those friendly and affectionate ties, which I had torn asunder at the rude summons of war.

"While such pleasing reflections were stealing over my mind, and gradually lulling me to slumber, I was suddenly aroused by a sound like that of the rustling of a silken gown, and the tapping of a pair of high-heeled shoes, as if a woman were walking in the apartment. Ere I could draw the curtain to see what the matter was, the figure of a little woman passed between the bed and the fire. The back of this form was turned to me, and I could observe, from the shoulders and neck, that it was that of an old woman, whose dress was an old-fashioned gown, which,

I think, ladies call a *sacque* ; that is, a sort of robe, completely loose in the body, but gathered into broad plaits upon the neck and shoulders, which fall down to the ground, and terminate in a species of train.

“I thought the intrusion singular enough, but never harbored for a moment the idea that what I saw was anything more than the mortal form of some old woman about the establishment, who had a fancy to dress like her grandmother, and who, having perhaps (as your lordship mentioned that you were rather straitened for room) been dislodged from her chamber for my accommodation, had forgotten the circumstance, and returned by twelve to her old haunt. Under this persuasion I moved myself in bed and coughed a little, to make the intruder sensible of my being in possession of the premises.—She turned slowly round, but, gracious heaven ! my lord, what a countenance did she display to me ! There was no longer any question what she was, or any thought of her being a living being. Upon a face which wore the fixed features of a corpse, were imprinted the traces of the vilest and most hideous passions which had animated her while she lived. The body of some atrocious criminal seemed to have been given up from the grave, and the soul restored from the penal fire, in order to form, for a space, a union with the ancient accomplice of its guilt. I started up in bed, and sat upright, supporting myself on my palms, as I gazed on this horrible spectre. The hag made, as it seemed, a single and swift stride to the bed where I lay, and squatted herself down upon it, in precisely the same attitude which I had assumed in the extremity of horror, advancing her diabolical countenance within half-a-yard of mine, with a grin which seemed to intimate the malice and the derision of an incarnate fiend.”

Here General Browne stopped, and wiped from his brow the cold perspiration with which the recollection of his horrible vision had covered it.

“My lord,” he said, “I am no coward. I have been in all the mortal dangers incidental to my profession, and I may truly boast, that no man every knew Richard Browne dishonor the sword he wears ; but in these horrible circumstances, under the eyes, and as it seemed, almost in the grasp of an incarnation of an evil spirit, all firmness forsook me, all manhood melted from me like wax in the furnace, and I felt my hair individually bristle. The current of my life-blood ceased to flow, and I sank back in a swoon, as very a victim to panic terror as ever was a village girl, or a child of ten years old. How long I lay in this condition I cannot pretend to guess.

"But I was roused by the castle clock striking one, so loud that it seemed as if it were in the very room. It was some time before I dared open my eyes, lest they should again encounter the horrible spectacle. When, however, I summoned courage to look up, she was no longer visible. My first idea was to pull my bell, wake the servants, and remove to a garret or a hay-loft, to be ensured against a second visitation. Nay, I will confess the truth, that my resolution was altered, not by the shame of exposing myself, but by the fear that, as the bell-cord hung by the chimney, I might, in making my way to it, be again crossed by the fiendish hag, who, I figured to myself, might be still lurking about some corner of the apartment.

"I will not pretend to describe what hot and cold fever-fits tormented me for the rest of the night, through broken sleep, weary vigils, and that dubious state which forns the neutral ground between them. A hundred terrible objects appeared to haunt me; but there was the great difference betwixt the vision which I have described, and those which followed that I knew the last to be deceptions of my own fancy and over-excited nerves.

"Day at last appeared, and I rose from my bed ill in health and humiliated in mind. I was ashamed of myself as a man and a soldier, and still more so, at feeling my own extreme desire to escape from the haunted apartment, which, however, conquered all other considerations; so that, huddling on my clothes with the most careless haste, I made my escape from your lordship's mansion, to seek in the open air some relief to my nervous system, shaken as it was by this horrible rencounter with a visitant, for such I must believe her, from the other world. Your lordship has now heard the cause of my discomposure, and of my sudden desire to leave your hospitable castle. In other places I trust we may often meet; but God protect me from ever spending a second night under that roof!"

Strange as the General's tale was, he spoke with such a deep air of conviction, that it cut short all the usual commentaries which are made on such stories. Lord Woodville never once asked him if he was sure he did not dream of the apparition, or suggested any of the possibilities by which it is fashionable to explain supernatural appearances, as wild vagaries of the fancy, or deceptions of the optic nerves. On the contrary, he seemed deeply impressed with the truth and reality of what he had heard; and, after a considerable pause, regretted, with much appearance of sincerity, that his early friend should in his house have suffered so severely.

"I am the more sorry for your pain, my dear Browne," he

continued, "that it is the unhappy, though most unexpected result of an experiment of my own! You must know, that for my father and grandfather's time, at least, the apartment which was assigned to you last night, had been shut on account of reports that it was disturbed by supernatural sights and noises. When I came, a few weeks since, into possession of the estate, I thought the accommodation, which the castle afforded for my friends, was not extensive enough to permit the inhabitants of the invisible world to retain possession of a comfortable sleeping apartment. I therefore caused the Tapestry Chamber, as we call it, to be opened; and without destroying its air of antiquity, I had such new articles of furnitures placed in it as became the modern times. Yet, as the opinion that the room was haunted very strongly prevailed among the domestics, and was also known in the neighborhood and to many of my friends, I feared some prejudice might be entertained by the first occupant of the Tapestry Chamber, which might tend to revive the evil report which it had labored under, and so disappoint my purpose of rendering it a useful part of the house. I must confess, my dear Browne, that your arrival yesterday, agreeable to me for a thousand reasons besides, seemed the most favorable opportunity of removing the unpleasant rumors which attached to the room, since your courage was indubitable, and your mind free of any pre-occupation on the subject. I could not, therefore, have chosen a more fitting subject for my experiment.

"Upon my life," said General Browne, somewhat hastily, "I am infinitely obliged to your lordship—very particularly indebted indeed. I am likely to remember for some time the consequences of the experiment, as your lordship is pleased to call it."

"Nay, now you are unjust, my dear friend," said Lord Woodville. "You have only to reflect for a single moment, in order to be convinced that I could not augur the possibility of the pain to which you have been so unhappily exposed. I was yesterday morning a complete sceptic on the subject of supernatural appearances. Nay, I am sure that had I told you what was said about that room, those very reports would have induced you, by your own choice, to select it for your accommodation. It was my misfortune, perhaps my error, but really cannot be termed my fault, that you have been afflicted so strangely."

"Strangely indeed!" said the General, resuming his good temper; "and I acknowledge that I have no right to be offended with your lordship for treating me like what I used to think myself—a man of some firmness and courage.—But I

see my post horses are arrived, and I must not detain your lordship from your amusement."

"Nay, my old friend," said Lord Woodville, "since you cannot stay with us another day, which, indeed, I can no longer urge, give me at least half-an-hour more. You used to love pictures, and I have a gallery of portraits, some of them by Vandyke, representing ancestry to whom this property and castle formerly belonged. I think that several of them will strike you as possessing merit."

General Browne accepted the invitation, though somewhat unwillingly. It was evident he was not to breathe freely or at ease till he left Woodville Castle far behind him. He could not refuse his friend's invitation, however; and the less so, that he was a little ashamed of the peevishness which he had displayed toward his well-meaning entertainer.

The General, therefore, followed Lord Woodville through several rooms, into a long gallery hung with pictures, which the latter pointed out to his guest, telling the names, and giving some account of the personages whose portraits presented themselves in progression. General Browne was but little interested in the details which these accyunts conveyed to him. They were, indeed, of the kind which are usually found in an old family gallery. Here was a cavalier who had ruined the estate in the royal cause; there a fine lady who had reinstated it by contracting a match with a wealthy Roundhead. There hung a gallant who had been in danger for corresponding with the exiled Court at Saint Germain's; here one who had taken arms for William at the Revolution; and there a third that had thrown his weight alternately into the scale of Whig and Tory.

While Lord Woodville was cramming these words into his guest's ear, "against the stomach of his sense," they gained the middle of the gallery, when he beheld General Browne suddenly start, and assume an attitude of the utmost surprise, not unmixed with fear, as his eyes were caught and suddenly riveted by a portrait of an old lady in a sacque, the fashionable dress of the end of the seventeenth century.

"There she is!" he exclaimed; "there she is, in form and features, though inferior in demoniac expression to the accursed hag who visited me last night!"

"If that be the case," said the young nobleman, "there can remain no longer any doubt of the horrible reality of your apparition. That is the picture of a wretched ancestress of mine, of whose crimes a black and fearful catalogue is recorded in a family history in my charter-chest, The recital of them would be too horrible; it is enough to say, that in yon fatal

apartment incest and unnatural murder were committed. I will restore it to the solitude to which the better judgment of those who preceded me had consigned it ; and never shall any one so long as I can prevent it, be exposed to a repetition of the supernatural horrors which could shake such courage as yours."

Thus the friends, who had met with such glee, parted in a very different mood ; Lord Woodville to command the Tapestried Chamber to be unmantled, and the door built up ; and General Browne to seek in some less beautiful country, and with some less dignified friend, forgetfulness of the painful night which he had passed in Woodville Castle.

DEATH OF THE LAIRD'S JOCK.

The manner in which this trifle was introduced at the time to Mr. F. M. Reynolds, editor of the Keepsake of 1828, leaves no occasion for a preface.

August 1831.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE KEEPSAKE.

You have asked me, sir, to point out a subject for the pencil, and I feel the difficulty of complying with your request ; although I am not certainly unaccustomed to literary composition, or a total stranger to the stories of history and tradition, which afford the best copies for the painter's art. But although *sicut pictura poesis* is an ancient and undisputed axiom—although poetry and painting both address themselves to the same object of exciting the human imagination, by presenting to it pleasing or sublime images of ideal scenes ; yet the one conveying itself through the ears to the understanding, and the other applying itself only to the eyes, the subjects which are best suited to the bard or tale-teller are often totally unfit for painting, where the artist must present in a single glance all that his art has power to tell us. The artist can neither recapitulate the past nor intimate the future. The single *now* is all which he can present ; and hence, unquestionably, many subjects which delight us in poetry, or in narrative, whether real or fictitious, cannot with advantage be transferred to the canvas.

Being in some degree aware of these difficulties, though doubtless unacquainted both with their extent, and the means by which they may be modified or surmounted, I have, nevertheless, ventured to draw up the following traditional narrative, as a story in which, when the general details are known, the interest is so much concentrated in one strong moment of agonizing passion, that it can be understood, and sympathized

with, at a single glance. I therefore presume that it may be acceptable as a hint to some one among the numerous artists, who have of late years distinguished themselves as rearing up and supporting the British school.

Enough has been said and sung about

The well contested ground,
The warlike border-land—

to render the habits of the tribes who inhabited them before the union of England and Scotland familiar to most of your readers. The rougher and sterner features of their character were softened by their attachment to the fine arts, from which has arisen the saying that, on the frontiers, every dale had its battle, and every river its song. A rude species of chivalry was in constant use, and single combats were practiced as the amusement of the few intervals of truce which suspended the exercise of war. The inveteracy of this custom may be inferred from the following incident :—

Bernard Gilpin, the apostle of the north, the first who undertook to preach the Protestant doctrines to the Border dalesmen, was surprised, on entering one of their churches, to see a gauntlet, or mail-glove, hanging above the altar. Upon inquiring the meaning of a symbol so indecorous being displayed in that sacred place, he was informed by the clerk, that the glove was that of a famous swordsman, who hung it there as an emblem of a general challenge and gage of battle, to any who should dare to take the fatal token down. “ Reach it to me,” said the reverend churchman. The clerk and sexton equally declined the perilous office ; and the good Bernard Gilpin was obliged to remove the glove with his own hands, desiring those who were present to inform the champion, that he, and no other, had possessed himself of the gage of defiance. But the champion was as much ashamed to face Bernard Gilpin as the officials of the church had been to displace his pledge of combat.

The date of the following story is about the latter years of Queen Elizabeth’s reign ; and the events took place in Liddesdale, a hilly and pastoral district of Roxburghshire, which, on a part of its boundary, is divided from England only by a small river.

During the good old times of *rugging and riving* (that is, tugging and tearing), under which term the disorderly doings of the warlike age are affectionately remembered, this valley was principally cultivated by the sept or clan of the Armstrongs.

The chief of this warlike race was the Laird of Mangertown. At the period of which I speak, the estate of Mangertown, with the power and dignity of chief, was possessed by John Armstrong, a man of great size, strength, and courage. While his father was alive, he was distinguished from others of his clan who bore the same name, by the epithet of the *Laird's Jock*, that is to say, the Laird's son Jock, or Jack. This name he distinguished by so many bold and desperate achievements, that he retained it even after his father's death, and is mentioned under it both in authentic records and in tradition. Some of his feats are recorded in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and others mentioned in contemporary chronicles.

At the species of singular combat which we have described, the Laird's Jock was unrivaled; and no champion of Cumberland, Westmoreland, or Northumberland, could endure the sway of the huge two-handed sword which he wielded, and which few others could even lift. This "awful sword," as the common people term it, was as dear to him as *Durindana* or *Fushberta* to their respective masters, and was nearly as formidable to his enemies as those renowned falchions proved to the foes of Christendom. The weapon had been bequeathed to him by a celebrated English outlaw named Hobbie Noble, who, having committed some deed for which he was in danger from justice, fled to Liddesdale, and became a follower, or rather a brother-in-arms, to the renowned Laird's Jock; till, venturing into England with a small escort, a faithless guide, and with a light single-handed sword instead of his ponderous brand, Hobbie Noble, attacked by superior numbers, was made prisoner and executed.

With this weapon, and by means of his own strength and address, the Laird's Jock maintained the reputation of the best swordsman on the Border side, and defeated or slew many who ventured to dispute with him the formidable title.

But years pass on with the strong and the brave as with the feeble and the timid. In process of time, the Laird's Jock grew incapable of wielding his weapons, and finally of all active exertion, even of the most ordinary kind. The disabled champion became at length totally bed-ridden, and entirely dependent for his comfort on the pious duties of an only daughter, his perpetual attendant and companion.

Besides this dutiful child, the Laird's Jock had an only son, upon whom devolved the perilous task of leading the clan to battle, and maintaining the warlike renown of his native country, which was now disputed by the English upon many occasions. The young Armstrong was active, brave, and strong, and brought

home from dangerous adventures many tokens of decided success. Still the ancient chief conceived as it would seem, that his son was scarce yet entitled by age and experience to be entrusted with the two-handed sword, by the use of which he had himself been so dreadfully distinguished.

At length, an English champion, one of the name of Foster (if I rightly recollect), had the audacity to send a challenge to the best swordsman in Liddesdale; and young Armstrong, burning for chivalrous distinction, accepted the challenge.

The heart of the disabled old man swelled with joy when he heard that the challenge was passed and accepted, and the meeting fixed at a neutral spot, used as the place of rencontre upon such occasions, and which he himself had distinguished by numerous victories. He exulted so much in the conquest which he anticipated, that, to nerve his son to still bolder exertions, he conferred upon him, as champion of his clan and province, the celebrated weapon which he had hitherto retained in his own custody.

This was not all. When the day of combat arrived, the Laird's Jock, in spite of his daughter's affectionate remonstrances, determined, though he had not left his bed for two years, to be a personal witness of the duel. His will was still a law to his people, who bore him on their shoulders, wrapped in plaids and blankets, to the spot where the combat was to take place, and seated him on a fragment of rock, which is still called the Laird's Jock's stone. There he remained with eyes fixed on the lists or barrier, within which the champions were about to meet. His daughter, having done all she could for his accommodation, stood motionless beside him, divided between anxiety for his health, and for the event of the combat to her beloved brother. Ere yet the fight began, the old men gazed on their chief, now seen for the first time after several years, and sadly compared his altered features and wasted frame, with the paragon of strength and manly beauty which they once remembered. The young men gazed on his large form and powerful make, as upon some antediluvian giant who had survived the destruction of the Flood.

But the sound of the trumpets on both sides recalled the attention of every one to the lists, surrounded as they were by numbers of both nations eager to witness the event of the day. The combatants met. It is needless to describe the struggle: the Scottish champion fell. Foster, placing his foot on his antagonist, seized on the redoubted sword, so precious in the eyes of its aged owner, and brandished it over his head as a trophy of his conquest. The English shouted in triumph. But the

despairing cry of the aged champion, who saw his country dishonored, and his sword, long the terror of their race, in possession of an Englishman, was heard high above the acclamations of victory. He seemed, for an instant, animated by all his wonted power; for he started from the rock on which he sat, and while the garments with which he had been invested fell from his wasted frame, and showed the ruins of his strength, he tossed his arms wildly to heaven, and uttered a cry of indignation, horror, and despair, which, tradition says, was heard to a preternatural distance, and resembled the cry of a dying lion more than a human sound.

His friends received him in their arms as he sank utterly exhausted by the effort, and bore him back to his castle in mute sorrow; while his daughter at once wept for her brother, and endeavored to mitigate and soothe the despair of her father. But this was impossible; the old man's only tie to life was rent rudely asunder, and his heart had broken with it. The death of his son had no part in his sorrow. If he thought of him at all, it was as the degenerate boy, through whom the honor of his country and clan had been lost; and he died in the course of three days, never even mentioning his name, but pouring out unintermitted lamentations for the loss of his sword.

I conceive, that the instant when the disabled chief was roused into a last exertion by the agony of the moment is favorable to the object of a painter. He might obtain the full advantage of contrasting the form of the rugged old man, in the extremity of furious despair, with the softness and beauty of the female form. The fatal field might be thrown into perspective, so as to give full effect to these two principal figures, and with the single explanation that the piece represented a soldier beholding his son slain, and the honor of his country lost, the picture would be sufficiently intelligible at the first glance. If it was thought necessary to show more clearly the nature of the conflict, it might be indicated by the pennon of Saint George being displayed at one end of the lists, and that of Saint Andrew at the other.

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY.



CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE.

SIC ITUR AD ASTRA.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION—(1831).

THE preceding Tale of this Collection * concluded the last of the pieces originally published under the *nominis umbra* of the Author of Waverley, and the circumstances which rendered it impossible for the writer to continue longer in the possession of his *incognito* were communicated in 1827, in the Introduction † to the first series of "Chronicles of the Canongate"—consisting (besides a biographical sketch of the imaginary chronicler) of three tales, entitled "The Highland Widow," "The Two Drovers," and "The Surgeon's Daughter." In this and the next volume are included the two first-named of these pieces, together with three detached stories, which appeared the year after in the elegant compilation called "The Keepsake." The "Surgeon's Daughter" it is thought better to defer until a succeeding volume, than to

"Begin and break off in the middle."

I have, perhaps, said enough on former occasions of the misfortunes which led to the dropping of that mask under which I had, for a long series of years, enjoyed so large a portion of public favor. Through the success of those literary efforts I had been enabled to indulge most of the tastes which a retired person of my station might be supposed to entertain. In the pen of this nameless romancer I seemed to possess something like the secret fountain of coined gold and pearls vouchsafed to the traveller of the Eastern Tale; and no doubt believed that I might venture, without silly imprudence, to extend my personal expenditure considerably beyond what I should have thought of, had my means been limited to the competence which I derived from inheritance, with the moderate income of a professional situation. I bought and built and planted, and was considered by myself, as by the rest of the world, in the safe possession of an easy fortune. My riches, however, like the other riches of this world, were liable to

* Namely, Woodstock, which forms Vol. XXI. of the present series.

† See also Appendix—Theatrical Fund Dinner.

accidents, under which they were ultimately destined to make unto themselves wings and fly away. The year 1825, so disastrous to many branches of industry and commerce, did not spare the market of literature; and the sudden ruin that fell on so many of the booksellers could scarcely have been expected to leave unscathed one whose career had of necessity connected him deeply and extensively with the pecuniary transactions of that profession. In a word, almost without one note of premonition, I found myself involved in the sweeping catastrophe of the unhappy time, and called on to meet the demands of creditors upon commercial establishments with which my fortunes had long been bound up, to the extent of no less a sum than one hundred and twenty thousand pounds.

The Author having, however rashly, committed his pledges thus largely to the hazards of trading companies, it behoved him, of course, to abide the consequences of his conduct, and, with whatever feelings, he surrendered on the instant every shred of property which he had been accustomed to call his own. It became vested in the hands of gentlemen whose integrity, prudence, and intelligence were combined with all possible liberality and kindness of disposition, and who readily afforded every assistance toward the execution of plans, in the success of which the Author contemplated the possibility of his ultimate extraction, and which were of such a nature that, had assistance of this sort been withheld, he could have had little prospect of carrying them into effect. Among other resources which occurred was the project of that complete and corrected edition of his Novels and Romances (whose real parentage had of necessity been disclosed at the moment of the commercial convulsions alluded to) which has now advanced with unprecedented favor nearly to its close; but as he purposed also to continue, for the behoof of those to whom he was indebted, the exercise of his pen in the same path of literature, so long as the taste of his countrymen should seem to approve of his efforts, it appeared to him that it would have been an idle piece of affectation to attempt getting up a new *incognito* after his original visor had been thus dashed from his brow. Hence the personal narrative prefixed to the first work of fiction which he put forth after the paternity of the "Waverley Novels" had come to be publicly ascertained; and though many of the particulars originally avowed in that Notice have been unavoidably adverted to in the preface and notes to some of the preceding volumes of the present collection, it is now reprinted as it stood at the time, because some interest is generally attached to a coin or medal struck on a special occasion, as expressing, perhaps, more faithfully than the same artist could have afterward conveyed, the feelings of the moment that gave it birth. The Introduction to the first series of "Chronicles of the Canongate" ran, then, in these words:

INTRODUCTION.

ALL who are acquainted with the early history of the Italian stage are aware that Arlechino is not, in his original conception, a mere worker of marvels with his wooden sword, a jumper in and out of windows, as upon our theatre, but, as his parti-colored jacket implies, a buffoon or clown, whose mouth, far from being eternally closed, as among us, is filled, like that of Touchstone, with quips and cranks and witty devices, very often delivered extempore. It is not easy to trace how he became possessed of his black vizard, which was anciently made in the resemblance of the face of a cat ; but it seems that the mask was essential to the performance of the character, as will appear from the following theatrical anecdote :

An actor on the Italian stage permitted at the Foire du St. Germain, in Paris, was renowned for the wild, venturous, and extravagant wit, the brilliant sallies, and fortunate repartees, with which he prodigally seasoned the character of parti-colored jester. Some critics, whose good-will toward a favorite performer was stronger than their judgment, took occasion to remonstrate with the successful actor on the subject of the grotesque vizard. They went wilily to their purpose, observing that his classical and Attic wit, his delicate vein of humor, his happy turn for dialogue, were rendered burlesque and ludicrous by this unmeaning and bizarre disguise, and that those attributes would become far more impressive if aided by the spirit of his eye and the expression of his natural features. The actor's vanity was easily so far engaged as to induce him to make the experiment. He played Harlequin barefaced, but was considered on all hands as having made a total failure. He had lost the audacity which a sense of incognito bestowed, and with it all the reckless play of raillery which gave vivacity to his original acting. He cursed his advisers, and resumed his grotesque vizard ; but, it is said, without ever being able to regain the careless and successful levity which the consciousness of the disguise had formerly bestowed.

Perhaps the Author of *Waverley* is now about to incur a risk of the same kind, and endanger his popularity by having laid aside his incognito. It is certainly not a voluntary experiment, like that of Harlequin ; for it was my original intention never to have avowed these works during my lifetime, and the original manuscripts were carefully preserved (though by the care of others rather than mine), with the purpose of supplying the necessary evidence of the truth when the period of announcing it should arrive.* But the affairs of my publishers having unfortunately passed into a management different from their own, I had no right any longer to rely upon secrecy in that quarter ; and thus my mask, like my Aunt Dinah's in "*Tristram Shandy*," having begun to wax a little threadbare about the chin, it became time to lay it aside

* These manuscripts are at present (August, 1831) advertised for public sale, which is an addition, though a small one, to other annoyances.

with a good grace, unless I desired it should fall in pieces from my face, which was now become likely.

Yet I had not the slightest intention of selecting the time and place in which the disclosure was finally made ; nor was there any concert betwixt my learned and respected friend LORD MEADOWBANK and myself upon that occasion. It was, as the reader is probably aware, upon the 23d February last, at a public meeting, called for establishing a professional Theatrical Fund in Edinburgh, that the communication took place. Just before we sat down to table Lord Meadowbank * asked me, privately, whether I was still anxious to preserve my incognito on the subject of what were called the Waverley Novels ? I did not immediately see the purpose of his Lordship's question, although I certainly might have been led to infer it, and replied, that the secret had now of necessity become known to so many people that I was indifferent on the subject. Lord Meadowbank was thus induced, while doing me the great honor of proposing my health to the meeting, to say something on the subject of these novels, so strongly connecting them with me as the author, that by remaining silent I must have stood convicted either of the actual paternity or of the still greater crime of being supposed willing to receive indirectly praise to which I had no just title. I thus found myself suddenly and unexpectedly placed in the confessional, and had only time to recollect that I had been guided thither by a most friendly hand, and could not, perhaps, find a better public opportunity to lay down a disguise which began to resemble that of a detected masquerader. †

I had therefore the task of avowing myself, to the numerous and respectable company assembled, as the sole and unaided author of these Novels of Waverley, the paternity of which was likely at one time to have formed a controversy of some celebrity, for the ingenuity with which some instructors of the public gave their assurance on the subject was extremely persevering. I now think it further necessary to say, that while I take on myself all the merits and demerits attending these compositions, I am bound to acknowledge with gratitude hints of subjects and legends which I have received from various quarters, and have occasionally used as a foundation of my fictitious compositions, or woven up with them in the shape of episodes. I am bound, in particular, to acknowledge the unremitting kindness of Mr. Joseph Train, Supervisor of Excise at Dumfries, to whose unwearied industry I have been indebted for many curious traditions and points of antiquarian interest. It was Mr. Train who brought to my recollection the history of Old Mortality, although I myself had had a personal interview with that celebrated wanderer so far back as about 1792, when I found him on his usual task. He was then engaged in repairing the gravestones of the Covenanters who had died while imprisoned in the Castle of Dunnottar, to which many of them were committed prisoners at the period of Argyle's rising ; their

* One of the Supreme Judges of Scotland, termed Lords of Council and Session.

† See Appendix—Theatrical Fund Dinner.

place of confinement is still called the Whigs' Vault. Mr. Train, however, procured for me far more extensive information concerning this singular person, whose name was Patterson, than I had been able to acquire during my own short conversation with him. He was (as I think I have somewhere already stated) a native of the parish of Closeburn, in Dumfriesshire, and it is believed that domestic affliction, as well as devotional feeling, induced him to commence the wandering mode of life which he pursued for a very long period. It is more than twenty years since Robert Patterson's death, which took place on the high road near Lockerby, where he was found exhausted and expiring. The white pony, the companion of his pilgrimage, was standing by the side of its dying master; the whole furnishing a scene not unfitted for the pencil. These particulars I had from Mr. Train.*

Another debt, which I pay most willingly, I owe to an unknown correspondent (a lady †), who favored me with the history of the upright and high-principled female whom, in "The Heart of Mid-Lothian," I have termed Jeanie Deans. The circumstance of her refusing to save her sister's life by an act of perjury, and undertaking a pilgrimage to London to obtain her pardon, are both represented as true by my fair and obliging correspondent; and they led me to consider the possibility of rendering a fictitious personage interesting by mere dignity of mind and rectitude of principle, assisted by unpretending good sense and temper, without any of the beauty, grace, talent, accomplishment, and wit to which a heroine of romance is supposed to have a prescriptive right. If the portrait was received with interest by the public, I am conscious how much it was owing to the truth and force of the original sketch, which I regret being unable to present to the public, as it was written with much feeling and spirit.

Old and odd books, and a considerable collection of family legends, formed another quarry, so ample, that it was much more likely that the strength of the laborer should be exhausted than that materials should fail. I may mention, for example's sake, that the terrible catastrophe of "The Bride of Lammermoor" actually occurred in a Scottish family of rank. The female relative by whom the melancholy tale was communicated to me, many years since, was a near connection of the family in which the event had happened, and always told it with an appearance of melancholy mystery, which enhanced the interest. She had known, in her youth, the brother who rode before the unhappy victim to the fatal altar, who, though then a mere boy, and occupied almost entirely with the gayety of his own appearance in the bridal procession, could not but remark that the hand of his sister was moist, and cold as that of a statue. It is unnecessary further to withdraw the veil from this scene of family distress, nor, although it occurred more than a hundred years since, might it be altogether agreeable to the representatives of the families concerned in the narrative.

*See, for some further particulars, the notes to *Old Mortality* in the present collective edition.

† The late Mrs. Goldie.

It may be proper to say that the events alone are imitated ; but I had neither the means nor intention of copying the manners or tracing the characters of the persons concerned in the real story.

Indeed, I may here state generally, that although I have deemed historical personages free subjects of delineation, I have never on any occasion violated the respect due to private life. It was indeed impossible that traits proper to persons, both living and dead, with whom I have had intercourse in society, should not have risen to my pen in such works as "*Waverley*," and those which followed it. But I have always studied to generalize the portraits, so that they should still seem, on the whole, the productions of fancy, though possessing some resemblance to real individuals. Yet I must own my attempts have not in this last particular been uniformly successful. There are men whose characters are so peculiarly marked that the delineation of some leading and principal feature inevitably places the whole person before you in his individuality. Thus the character of Jonathan Oldbuck, in "*The Antiquary*," was partly founded on that of an old friend of my youth, to whom I am indebted for introducing me to Shakespeare, and other invaluable favors ; but I thought I had so completely disguised the likeness that his features could not be recognized by any one alive. I was mistaken, however, and indeed had endangered what I desired should be considered as a secret ; for I afterward learned that a highly respectable gentleman, one of the few surviving friends of my father,* and an acute critic, had said, upon the appearance of the work, that he was now convinced who was the author of it, as he recognized in the *Antiquary* of Monkbaron traces of the character of a very intimate friend of my father's family.

I may here also notice that the sort of exchange of gallantry which is represented as taking place betwixt *Waverley* and Colonel Talbot is a literal fact. The real circumstances of the anecdote, alike honorable to Whig and Tory, are these :

Alexander Stewart of Invernahyle—a name which I cannot write without the warmest recollections of gratitude to the friend of my childhood who first introduced me to the Highlands, their traditions, and their manners—had been engaged actively in the troubles of 1745. As he charged at the battle of Preston with his clan, the Stewarts of Appine, he saw an officer of the opposite army standing alone by a battery of four cannon, of which he discharged three on the advancing Highlanders, and then drew his sword. Invernahyle rushed on him, and required him to surrender. "Never to rebels!" was the undaunted reply, accompanied with a lunge, which the Highlander received on his target ; but instead of using his sword in cutting down his now defenceless antagonist, he employed it in parrying the blow of a Lochaber-axe, aimed at the officer by the miller, one of his own followers, a grim-looking old Highlander, whom I remember to have seen. Thus overpowered, Lieutenant-Colonel Allan Whitefoord, a gentleman of rank and consequence, as well as a brave officer, gave up his

* James Chalmers, Esq., Solicitor-at-law, London, who died during the publication of the present edition of these Novels. (Aug., 1831.)

sword, and with it his purse and watch, which Invernahyle accepted. to save them from his followers. After the affair was over, Mr. Stewart sought out his prisoner, and they were introduced to each other by the celebrated John Roy Stewart, who acquainted Colonel Whitefoord with the quality of his captor, and made him aware of the necessity of receiving back his property, which he was inclined to leave in the hands to which it had fallen. So great became the confidence established betwixt them, that Invernahyle obtained from the Chevalier his prisoner's freedom upon parole ; and soon afterward, having been sent back to the Highlands to raise men, he visited Colonel Whitefoord at his own house, and spent two happy days with him and his Whig friends, without thinking, on either side, of the civil war which was then raging.

When the battle of Culloden put an end to the hopes of Charles Edward, Invernahyle, wounded and unable to move, was borne from the field by the faithful zeal of his retainers. But, as he had been a distinguished Jacobite, his family and property were exposed to the system of vindictive destruction too generally carried into execution through the country of the insurgents. It was now Colonel Whitefoord's turn to exert himself, and he wearied all the authorities, civil and military, with his solicitations for pardon to the saver of his life, or at least for a protection for his wife and family. His applications were for a long time unsuccessful : " I was found with the mark of the Beast upon me in every list," was Invernahyle's expression. At length Colonel Whitefoord applied to the Duke of Cumberland, and urged his suit with every argument which he could think of. Being still repulsed, he took his commission from his bosom, and, having said something of his own and his family's exertions in the cause of the House of Hanover, begged to resign his situation in their service, since he could not be permitted to show his gratitude to the person to whom he owed his life. The Duke, struck with his earnestness, desired him to take up his commission, and granted the protection required for the family of Invernahyle.

The chieftain himself lay concealed in a cave near his own house, before which a small body of regular soldiers were encamped. He could hear their muster-roll called every morning, and their drums beat to quarter at nights, and not a change of the sentinels escaped him. As it was suspected that he was lurking somewhere on the property, his family were closely watched, and compelled to use the utmost precaution in supplying him with food. One of his daughters, a child of eight or ten years old, was employed as the agent least likely to be suspected. She was an instance, among others, that a time of danger and difficulty creates a premature sharpness of intellect. She made herself acquainted among the soldiers, till she became so familiar to them that her motions escaped their notice ; and her practice was, to stroll away in the neighborhood of the cave and leave what slender supply of food she carried for that purpose under some remarkable stone, or the root of some tree, where her father might find it as he crept by

night from his lurking-place. Times became milder, and my excellent friend was relieved from proscription by the Act of Indemnity. Such is the interesting story which I have rather injured than improved by the manner in which it is told in "Waverley."

This incident, with several other circumstances illustrating the Tales in question, was communicated by me to my late lamented friend, William Erskine (a Scottish Judge, by the title of Lord Kinnedder), who afterward reviewed with far too much partiality the "Tales of my Landlord," for the *Quarterly Review* of January, 1817.* In the same article are contained other illustrations of the Novels, with which I supplied my accomplished friend who took the trouble to write the review. The reader who is desirous of such information will find the original of Meg Merrilies, and, I believe, of one or two other personages of the same cast of character in the article referred to.

I may also mention, that the tragic and savage circumstances which are represented as preceding the birth of Allan MacAulay, in the "Legend of Montrose," really happened in the family of Stewart of Ardvorlich. The wager about the candlesticks, whose place was supplied by Highland torch-bearers, was laid and won by one of the MacDonalds of Keppoch.

There can be but little amusement in winnowing out the few grains of truth which are contained in this mass of empty fiction. I may, however, before dismissing the subject, allude to the various localities which have been affixed to some of the scenery introduced into these Novels, by which, for example, Wolf's Hope is identified with Fast Castle in Berwickshire, Tillietudlem with Draphane in Clydesdale, and the valley in "The Monastery," called Glendearg, with the dale of the river Allan, above Lord Somerville's villa, near Melrose. I can only say, that, in these and other instances, I had no purpose of describing any particular local spot; and the resemblance must therefore be of that general kind which necessarily exists between scenes of the same character. The iron-bound coast of Scotland affords upon its headlands and promontories fifty such castles as Wolf's Hope; every county has a valley more or less resembling Glendearg; and if castles like Tillietudlem, or mansions like the Baron of Bradwardine's, are now less frequently to be met with, it is owing to the rage of indiscriminate destruction, which has removed or ruined so many monuments of antiquity, when they were not protected by their inaccessible situation.†

The scraps of poetry which have been in most cases tacked to the beginning of chapters in these Novels, are sometimes quoted either from reading or from memory, but, in the general case, are pure invention. I found it too troublesome to turn to the collection of the British Poets to discover apposite mottoes, and, in the

* Lord Kinnedder died in August, 1822. Eheu! (Aug., 1831.)

† I would particularly intimate the Kaim of Urie, on the eastern coast of Scotland, as having suggested an idea for the tower called Wolf's Crag, which the public more generally identified with the ancient tower of Fast Castle.

situation of the theatrical mechanist, who, when the white paper which represented his shower of snow was exhausted, continued the storm by snowing brown, I drew on my memory as long as I could, and when that failed, eked it out with invention. I believe that, in some cases, where actual names are affixed to the supposed quotations, it would be to little purpose to seek them in the works of the authors referred to. In some cases I have been entertained when Dr. Watts and other graver authors have been ransacked in vain for stanzas for which the novelist alone was responsible.

And now the reader may expect me, while in the confessional, to explain the motives why I have so long persisted in disclaiming the works of which I am now writing. To this it would be difficult to give any other reply, save that of Corporal Nym—It was the author's humor or caprice for the time. I hope it will not be construed into ingratitude to the public, to whose indulgence I have owed my *sang-froid* much more than to any merit of my own, if I confess that I am, and have been, more indifferent to success, or to failure, as an author, than may be the case with others, who feel more strongly the passion for literary fame, probably because they are justly conscious of a better title to it. It was not until I had attained the age of thirty years that I made any serious attempt at distinguishing myself as an author; and at that period men's hopes, desires, and wishes have usually acquired something of a decisive character, and are not eagerly and easily diverted into a new channel. When I made the discovery—for to me it was one—that by amusing myself with composition, which I felt a delightful occupation, I could also give pleasure to others, and became aware that literary pursuits were likely to engage in future a considerable portion of my time, I felt some alarm that I might acquire those habits of jealousy and fretfulness which have lessened and degraded the character even of great authors, and rendered them, by their petty squabbles and mutual irritability, the laughing-stock of the people of the world. I resolved, therefore, in this respect, to guard my breast, perhaps an unfriendly critic may add, my brow, with triple brass,* and as much as possible to avoid resting my thoughts and wishes upon literary success, lest I should endanger my own peace of mind and tranquillity by literary failure. It would argue either stupid apathy or ridiculous affectation to say that I have been insensible to the public applause, when I have been honored with its testimonies; and still more highly do I prize the invaluable friendships which some temporary popularity has enabled me to form among those of my contemporaries most distinguished by talents and genius, and which I venture to hope now rest upon a basis more firm than the circumstances which gave rise to them. Yet, feeling all these advantages as a man ought to do, and must do, I may say, with truth and confidence, that I have, I think, tasted of the intoxicating cup with moderation, and that I have never, either in conversation or corre-

* Not altogether impossible, when it is considered that I have been at the bar since 1792! (Aug., 1831.)

spondence, encouraged discussions respecting my own literary pursuits. On the contrary, I have usually found such topics, even when introduced from motives most flattering to myself, rather embarrassing and disagreeable.

I have now frankly told my motives for concealment, so far as I am conscious of having any, and the public will forgive the egotism of the detail, as what is necessarily connected with it. The Author, so long and loudly called for, has appeared on the stage, and made his obeisance to the audience. Thus far his conduct is a mark of respect. To linger in their presence would be intrusion.

I have only to repeat that I avow myself in print, as formerly in words, the sole and unassisted Author of all the Novels published as works of the "Author of Waverley." I do this without shame, for I am unconscious that there is anything in their composition which deserves reproach, either on the score of religion or morality; and without any feeling of exultation, because, whatever may have been their temporary success, I am well aware how much their reputation depends upon the caprice of fashion; and I have already mentioned the precarious tenure by which it is held as a reason for displaying no great avidity in grasping at the possession.

I ought to mention, before concluding, that twenty persons, at least, were, either from intimacy or from the confidence which circumstances rendered necessary, participant of this secret; and as there was no instance, to my knowledge, of any one of the number breaking faith, I am the more obliged to them, because the slight and trivial character of the mystery was not qualified to inspire much respect in those intrusted with it. Nevertheless, like Jack the Giant-Killer, I was fully confident in the advantage of my "Coat of Darkness," and had it not been from compulsory circumstances I would indeed have been very cautious how I parted with it.

As for the work which follows, it was meditated, and in part printed, long before the avowal of the Novels took place, and was originally commenced with a declaration that it was neither to have introduction nor preface of any kind. This long proem, prefixed to a work intended not to have any, may, however, serve to show how human purposes, in the most trifling, as well as the most important affairs, are liable to be controlled by the course of events. Thus, we begin to cross a strong river with our eyes and our resolution fixed on that point of the opposite shore on which we purpose to land; but, gradually giving way to the torrent, are glad, by the aid perhaps of branch or bush, to extricate ourselves at some distant and perhaps dangerous landing-place, much farther down the stream than that on which we had fixed our intentions.

Hoping that the Courteous Reader will afford to a known and familiar acquaintance some portion of the favor which he extended to a disguised candidate for his applause, I beg leave to subscribe myself his obliged, humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

ABBOTSFORD, October 1, 1827.

SUCH was the little narrative which I thought proper to put forth in October, 1827 : nor have I much to add to it now. About to appear for the first time in my own name in this department of letters, it occurred to me that something in the shape of a periodical publication might carry with it a certain air of novelty, and I was willing to break, if I may so express it, the abruptness of my personal forthcoming, by investing an imaginary coadjutor with at least as much distinctness of individual existence as I had ever previously thought it worth while to bestow on shadows of the same convenient tribe. Of course it had never been in my contemplation to invite the assistance of any person in the sustaining of my quasi-editorial character and labors. It had long been my opinion that anything like a literary *picnic* is likely to end in suggesting comparisons, justly termed odious, and therefore to be avoided : and indeed, I had also had some occasion to know that promises of assistance in efforts of that order are apt to be more magnificent than the subsequent performance. I therefore planned a miscellany, to be dependent, after the old fashion, on my own resources alone, and although conscious enough that the moment which assigned to the Author of Waverley "a local habitation and a name," had seriously endangered his spell, I felt inclined to adopt the sentiment of my old hero, Montrose, and to say to myself that, in literature as in war,

" He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch,
To win or lose it all."

To the particulars explanatory of the plan of these Chronicles which the reader is presented with in Chapter II. by the imaginary Editor, Mr. Croftangry, I have now to add, that the lady, termed in his narrative Mrs. Bethune Baliol, was designed to shadow out in its leading points the interesting character of a dear friend of mine, Mrs. Murray Keith,* whose death, occurring shortly before, had saddened a wide circle, much attached to her as well for her genuine virtue and amiable qualities of disposition,

* The Keiths of Craig, in Kincardineshire, descended from John Keith, fourth son of William, second Earl Marischal, who got from his father, about 1480, the lands of Craig, and part of Garvock, in that county. In Douglas's Baronage, 443 to 445, is a pedigree of that family. Colonel Robert Keith of Craig (the seventh in descent from John), by his wife Agnes, daughter of Robert Murray, of Murrayshall, of the family of Blackbarony, widow of Colonel Stirling, of the family of Keir, had one son—viz., Robert Keith of Craig, ambassador to the Court of Vienna, afterward to St. Petersburg, which latter situation he held at the accession of King George III.—who died at Edinburgh in 1774. He married Margaret, second daughter of Sir William Cunningham of Caprington, by Janet, only child and heiress of Sir James Dick of Prestonfield ; and among other children of this marriage were the late well-known diplomatist, Sir Robert Murray Keith, K. B., a general in the army, and for some time ambassador at Vienna ; Sir Basil Keith, Knight, captain in the navy, who died governor of Jamaica ; and my excellent friend, Anne Murray Keith, who ultimately came into possession of the family estates, and died not long before the date of this Introduction. (1831.)

as for the extent of information which she possessed, and the delightful manner in which she was used to communicate it. In truth, the Author had, on many occasions, been indebted to her vivid memory for the *substratum* of his Scottish fictions—and she accordingly had been, from an early period, at no loss to fix the *Waverley Novels* on the right culprit.

In the sketch of Chrystal Croftangry's own history the Author has been accused of introducing some not polite allusions to respectable living individuals; but he may safely, he presumes, pass over such an insinuation. The first of the narratives which Mr. Croftangry proceeds to lay before the public, "The Highland Widow," was derived from Mrs. Murray Keith, and is given, with the exception of a few additional circumstances—the introduction of which I am rather inclined to regret—very much as the excellent old lady used to tell the story. Neither the Highland cicerone MacLeish, nor the demure waiting-woman, were drawn from imagination; and on re-reading my tale, after the lapse of a few years, and comparing its effect with my remembrance of my worthy friend's oral narration, which was certainly extremely affecting, I cannot but suspect myself of having marred its simplicity by some of those interpolations which, at the time when I penned them, no doubt passed with myself for embellishments.*

The next tale (in Vol. XX.), entitled "The Two Drovers," I learned from another old friend, the late George Constable, Esq., of Wallace Craigie, near Dundee, whom I have already introduced to my reader as the original Antiquary of Monkbarns. He had been present, I think, at the trial at Carlisle, and seldom mentioned the venerable Judge's charge to the jury without shedding tears, which had peculiar pathos, as flowing down features carrying rather a sarcastic, or almost a cynical, expression.

This worthy gentleman's reputation for shrewd Scottish sense, knowledge of our national antiquities, and a racy humor peculiar to himself, must be still remembered. For myself, I have pride in recording that for many years we were, in Wordsworth's language,

— a pair of friends, though I was young,
And "George" was seventy-two.

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, Aug. 15, 1831

* [The portraiture of Mrs. Murray Keith, under the name of Mrs. Bethune Beliel, and that of Chrystal Croftangry throughout, appear to me unsurpassed in Scott's writings. In the former I am assured he has mixed up various features of his own beloved mother; and in the latter there can be no doubt that a good deal was taken from nobody but himself. In fact the choice of the hero's residence, the original title of the book, and a world of minor circumstances, were suggested by the actual condition and prospects of the Author's affairs; for it appears from his Diary that, between December, 1826, and November, 1827, he had renewed threatenings of severe treatment from one of his creditors, and on the occasion made every preparation for taking shelter in the Sanctuary for debt at Holyrood.—J. G. LOCKHART.]

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE

CHAPTER FIRST.

MR. CHRYSTAL CROFTANGRY'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF.

SIC ITUR AD ASTRA—"This is the path to Heaven." Such is the ancient motto attached to the armorial bearings of the Canongate, and which is inscribed, with greater or less propriety, upon all the public buildings, from the church to the pillory, in the ancient quarter of Edinburgh, which bears, or rather once bore, the same relation to the Good Town that Westminster does to London, being still possessed of the palace of the sovereign, as it formerly was dignified by the residence of the principal nobility and gentry. I may, therefore, with some propriety, put the same motto at the head of the literary undertaking by which I hope to illustrate the hitherto undistinguished name of Chrystal Croftangry.

The public may desire to know something of an author who pitches at such height his ambitious expectations. The gentle reader, therefore—for I am much of Captain Bobadil's humor, and could to no other extend myself so far—the *gentle* reader, then, will be pleased to understand, that I am a Scottish gentleman of the old school, with a fortune, temper, and person, rather the worse for wear. I have known the world for these forty years, having written myself man nearly since that period—and I do not think it is much mended. But this is an opinion which I keep to myself when I am among younger folk, for I recollect, in my youth, quizzing the Sexagenarians who carried back their ideas of a perfect state of society to the days of laced coats and riple ruffles, and some of them to the blood and blows of the Forty-five: therefore I am cautious in exercising the right of censorship, which is supposed to be acquired by men arrived at,

or approaching, the mysterious period of life, when the numbers of seven and nine multiplied into each other, form what sages have termed the Grand Climacteric.

Of the earlier part of my life it is only necessary to say, that I swept the boards of the Parliament House with the skirts of my gown for the usual number of years during which young Lairds were in my time expected to keep term—got no fees—laughed, and made others laugh—drank claret at Bayle's, Fortune's and Walker's,—and ate oysters in the Covenant Close.

Becoming my own master, I flung my gown at the bar-keeper, and commenced gay man on my own account. In Edinburgh, I ran into all the expensive society which the place then afforded. When I went to my house in the shire of Lanark, I emulated to the utmost the expenses of men of large fortune, and had my hunters, my first-rate pointers, my game-cocks, and feeders. I can more easily forgive myself for these follies, than for others of a still more blamable kind, so indifferently cloaked over, that my poor mother thought herself obliged to leave my habitation, and betake herself to a small inconvenient jointure-house, which she occupied till her death. I think, however, I was not exclusively to blame in this separation, and I believe my mother afterward condemned herself for being too hasty. Thank God, the adversity which destroyed the means of continuing my dissipation restored me to the affections of my surviving parent.

My course of life could not last. I ran too fast to run long; and when I would have checked my career, I was perhaps too near the brink of the precipice. Some mishaps I prepared by my own folly, others came upon me unawares. I put my estate out to nurse to a fat man of business, who smothered the babe he should have brought back to me in health and strength, and, in dispute with this honest gentleman, I found, like a skilful general, that my position would be most judiciously assumed, by taking it up near the Abbey of Holyrood.* It was then I first became acquainted with the quarter, which my little work will, I hope, render immortal, and grew familiar with those magnificent wilds, through which the Kings of Scotland once chased the dark-brown deer, but which were chiefly recommended to me in those days, by their being inaccessible to those metaphysical persons, whom the law of the neighboring country terms John Doe and Richard Roe. In short, the precincts of the palace are now best known as being a place of refuge at any time from all pursuit for civil debt.

Dire was the strife betwixt my quondam doer and myself ;

* Note A. Sanctuary of Holyrood

during which my motions were circumscribed, like those of some conjured demon, within a circle, which, "beginning at the northern gate of the King's Park, thence running northwards, is bounded on the left by the King's garden wall, and the gutter, or kennel, in a line wherewith it crosses the High Street to the Watergate, and passing through the sewer, is bounded by the walls of the Tennis Court and physic Garden, etc. It then follows the walls of the churchyard, joins the north-west wall of St. Ann's Yards, and going east to the clack mill house, turns southward to the turnstile in the King's Park wall, and includes the whole King's Park within the Sanctuary."

"These limits, which I abridge from the accurate Maitland, once marked the Girth or Asylum belonging to the Abbey of Holyrood, and which, being still an appendage to the royal palace, has retained the privilege of an asylum for civil debt. One would think the space sufficiently extensive for a man to stretch his limbs in, as, besides a reasonable proportion of leve-ground (considering that the scene lies in Scotland), it includes within its precincts the mountain of Arthur's Seat, and the rocks and pasture land called Salisbury Crags. But yet it is inexpressible how after a certain time had elapsed, I used to long for Sunday, which permitted me to extend my walk without limitation. During the other six days of the week I felt a sickness of heart, which, but for the speedy approach of the hebdomadal day of liberty, I could hardly have endured. I experienced the impatience of a mastiff, who tugs in vain to extend the limits which his chain permits.

Day after day I walked by the side of the kennel which divides the Sanctuary from the unprivileged part of the Canongate; and though the month was July, and the scene the old town of Edinburgh, I preferred it to the fresh air and verdant turf which I might have enjoyed in the King's Park, or to the cool and solemn gloom of the portico which surrounds the palace. To an indifferent person either side of the gutter would have seemed much the same—the houses equally mean, the children as ragged and dirty, the carmen as brutal, the whole forming the same picture of low life in a deserted and impoverished quarter of a large city. But to me the gutter or kennel was what the brook Kedron was to Shimei; death was denounced against him should he cross it, doubtless because it was known to his wisdom who pronounced the doom, that from the time the crossing the stream was debarred, the devoted man's desire to transgress the precept would become irresistible, and he would be sure to draw down on his head the penalty which he had already justly incurred by cursing the anointed of God. For

my part, all Elysium seemed opening on the other side of the kennel, and I envied the little blackguards, who, stopping the current with their little damdikes of mud, had a right to stand on either side of the nasty puddle which best pleased them. I was so childish as even to make an occasional excursion across, were it only for a few yards, and felt the triumph of a school-boy, who, trespassing in an orchard, hurries back again with a fluttering sensation of joy and terror, betwixt the pleasure of having executed his purpose, and the fear of being taken or discovered.

I have sometimes asked myself, what I should have done in case of actual imprisonment, since I could not bear without impatience a restriction which is comparatively a mere trifle ; but I really could never answer the question to my own satisfaction. I have all my life hated those treacherous expedients called *mezzo-termini*, and it is possible with this disposition I might have endured more patiently an absolute privation of liberty, than the more modified restrictions to which my residence in the Sanctuary at this period subjected me. If, however, the feelings I then experienced were to increase in intensity according to the difference between a jail and my actual condition, I must have hanged myself, or pined to death ; there could have been no other alternative.

Amongst many companions who forgot and neglected me of course, when my difficulties seemed to be inextricable, I had one true friend ; and that friend was a barrister, who knew the laws of his country well, and tracing them up to the spirit of equity and justice in which they originate, had repeatedly prevented, by his benevolent and manly exertions, the triumphs of selfish cunning over simplicity and folly. He undertook my cause, with the assistance of a solicitor of a character similar to his own. My quondam doer had ensconced himself chin-deep among legal trenches, hornworks and covered ways ; but my two protectors shelled him out of his defences, and I was at length a free man, at liberty to go or stay wheresoever my mind listed.

I left my lodgings as hastily as if it had been a pest-house ; I did not even stop to receive some change that was due to me on settling with my landlady, and I saw the poor woman stand at her door looking after my precipitate flight, and shaking her head as she wrapped the silver which she was counting for me in a separate piece of paper apart from the store in her own moleskin purse. An honest Highland woman was Janet Mac-Evoy, and deserved a greater remuneration, had I possessed the power of bestowing it. But my eagerness of delight was too extreme to pause for explanation with Janet. On I pushed

through the groups of children, of whose sports I had been so often a lazy lounging spectator. I sprung over the gutter as if it had been the fatal Styx, and I a ghost, which, eluding Pluto's authority, was making its escape from Limbo lake. My friend had difficulty to restrain me from running like a madman up the street; and in spite of his kindness and hospitality, which soothed me for a day or two, I was not quite happy until I found myself aboard of a Leith smack, and, standing down the Firth with a fair wind, might snap my fingers at the retreating outline of Arthur's Seat, to the vicinity of which I had been so long confined.

It is not my purpose to trace my future progress though life. I had extricated myself, or rather had been freed by my friends, from the brambles and thickets of the law, but, as befell the sheep in the fable, a great part of my fleece was left behind me. Something remained, however; I was in the season for exertion, and as my good mother used to say, there was always life for living folk. Stern necessity gave my manhood that prudence which my youth was a stranger to. I faced danger, I endured fatigue, I sought foreign climates, and proved that I belonged to the nation which is proverbially patient of labor and prodigal of life. Independence, like liberty to Virgil's shepherd, came late, but came at last, with no great affluence in its train, but bringing enough to support a decent appearance for the rest of my life, and to induce cousins to be civil, and gossips to say, "I wonder who old Croft will make his heir? he must have picked up something, and I should not be surprised if it prove more than folk think of."

My first impulse when I returned home was to rush to the house of my benefactor, the only man who had in my distress interested himself in my behalf. He was a snuff-taker, and it had been the pride of my heart to save the *ipsa corpora* of the first score of guineas I could hoard, and to have them converted into as tasteful a snuff-box as Rundell and Bridge could devise. This I had thrust for security into the breast of my waistcoat, while, impatient to transfer it to the person for whom it was destined, I hastened to his house in Brown's Square. When the front of the house became visible, a feeling of alarm checked me. I had been long absent from Scotland, my friend was some years older than I; he might have been called to the congregation of the just. I paused, and gazed on the house, as if I had hoped to form some conjecture from the outward appearance concerning the state of the family within. I know not how it was, but the lower windows being all closed and no one stirring, my sinister forebodings were rather strengthened.

I regretted now that I had not made inquiry before I left the inn where I alighted from the mail-coach. But it was too late; so I hurried on, eager to know the best or the worst which I could learn.

The brass plate bearing my friend's name and designation was still on the door, and when it was opened, the old domestic appeared a good deal older, I thought, than he ought naturally to have looked considering the period of my absence. "Is Mr Sommerville at home?" said I, pressing forward.

"Yes, sir," said John, placing himself in opposition to my entrance, "he is at home, but"——

"But he is not in," said I. "I remember your phrase of old, John. Come, I will step into his room, and leave a line for him."

John was obviously embarrassed by my familiarity. I was some one, he saw, whom he ought to recollect, at the same time it was evident he remembered nothing about me.

"Ay, sir, my master is in, and in his own room, but"——

I would not hear him out, but passed before him toward the well-known apartment. A young lady came out of the room a little disturbed, as it seemed, and said, "John, what is the matter?"

"A gentleman, Miss Nelly, that insists on seeing my master."

"A very old and deeply indebted friend," said I, "that ventures to press myself on my much-respected benefactor on my return from abroad."

"Alas, sir," replied she, "my uncle would be happy to see you, but"——

At this moment, something was heard within the apartment like the falling of a plate, or glass, and immediately after my friend's voice called angrily and eagerly for his niece. She entered the room hastily, and so did I. But it was to see a spectacle, compared with which that of my benefactor stretched on his bier would have been a happy one.

The easy chair filled with cushions, the extended limbs swathed in flannel, the wide wrapping-gown and night-cap, showed illness; but the dimmed eye, once so replete with living fire, the blabber lip, whose dilation and compression used to give such character to his animated countenance,—the stammering tongue, that once poured forth such floods of masculine eloquence, and had often swayed the opinion of the sages whom he addressed,—all these sad symptoms evinced that my friend was in the melancholy condition of those, in whom the principle of animal life has unfortunately survived that of mental intelli-

gence. He gazed a moment at me, but then seemed insensible of my presence, and went on—he, once the most courteous and well-bred!—to babble unintelligible but violent reproaches against his niece and servant, because he himself had dropped a teacup in attempting to place it on a table at his elbow. His eyes caught a momentary fire from his irritation; but he struggled in vain for words to express himself adequately, as looking from his servant to his niece, and then to the table, he labored to explain that they had placed it (though it touched his chair) at too great a distance from him.

The young person, who had naturally a resigned Madonna-like expression of countenance, listened to his impatient chiding with the most humble submission, checked the servant, whose less delicate feelings would have entered on his justification, and gradually, by the sweet and soft tone of her voice, soothed to rest the spirit of causeless irritation.

She then cast a look toward me, which expressed, “You see all that remains of him whom you call friend.” It seemed also to say, “Your longer presence here can only be distressing to us all.”

“Forgive me, young lady,” I said, as well as tears would permit; “I am a person deeply obliged to your uncle. My name is Croftangry.”

“Lord! and that I should not hae minded ye, Maister Croftangry,” said the servant. “Ay, I mind my master had muckle fash about your job. I hae heard him order in fresh candles as midnight chappit, and till’t again. Indeed, ye had aye his gude word, Mr. Croftangry, for a’ that folks said about you.”

“Hold your tongue, John,” said the lady, somewhat angrily; and then continued, addressing herself to me, “I am sure, sir, you must be sorry to see my uncle in this state. I know you are his friend. I have heard him mention your name, and wonder he never heard from you.” A new cut this, and it went to my heart. But she continued, “I really do not know if it is right that any should—If my uncle should know you, which I scarce think possible, he would be much affected, and the doctor says that any agitation——But here comes Dr. —— to give his own opinion.”

Dr. —— entered. I had left him a middle-aged man; he was now an elderly one; but still the same benevolent Samaritan, who went about doing good, and thought the blessings of the poor as good a recompense of his professional skill as the gold of the rich.

He looked at me with surprise, but the young lady said a word of introduction, and I, who was known to the doctor for-

merly, hastened to complete it. He recollected me perfectly, and intimated that he was well acquainted with the reasons I had for being deeply interested in the fate of his patient. He gave me a very melancholy account of my poor friend, drawing me for that purpose a little apart from the lady. "The light of life," he said, "was trembling in the socket; he scarcely expected it would ever leap up even into a momentary flash, but more was impossible." He then stepped toward his patient and put some questions, to which the poor invalid, though he seemed to recognize the friendly and familiar voice, answered only in a faltering and uncertain manner.

The young, lady, in her turn, had drawn back when the doctor approached his patient. "You see how it is with him," said the doctor, addressing me; "I have heard our poor friend in one of the most eloquent of his pleadings, give a description of this very disease, which he compared to the tortures inflicted by Mezentius, when he chained the dead to the living. The soul, he said, is imprisoned in its dungeon of flesh, and though retaining its natural and inalienable properties, can no more exert them than the captive enclosed within a prison-house can act as a free agent. *Alas!* to see *him*, who could so well describe what this malady was in others, a prey himself to its infirmities! I shall never forget the solemn tone of expression with which he summed up the incapacities of the paralytic,—the deafened ear, the dimmed eye, the crippled limbs,—in the noble words of Juvenal—

———' omni

Membrorum damno major, dementia, quæ nec
Nomina servorum, nec vultum agnoscit amici."

As the physician repeated these lines, a flash of intelligence seemed to revive in the invalid's eyes—sunk again—again struggled, and he spoke more intelligibly than before, and in the tone of one eager to say something which he felt would escape him unless said instantly. "A question of deathbed, a question of deathbed, doctor—a reduction *ex capite lecti*—Withering against Wilibus—about the *morbus santicus*. I pleaded the cause for the pursuer—I, and—and—Why, I shall forget my own name—I, and—he that was the wittiest and the best-humored man living"—

The description enabled the doctor to fill up the blank, and the patient joyfully repeated the name suggested. "Ay, ay," he said, "just he—Harry—poor Harry"—The light in his eye died away, and he sunk back in his easy chair.

"You have now seen more of our poor friend, Mr. Croft

angry," said the physician, "than I dared venture to promise you, and now I must take my professional authority on me, and ask you to retire. Miss Sommerville will, I am sure, let you know if a moment should by any chance occur when her uncle can see you."

What could I do? I gave my card to the young lady, and, taking my offering from my bosom—"If my poor friend," I said, with accents as broken almost as his own, "should ask where this came from, name me; and say from the most obliged and most grateful man alive. Say, the gold of which it is composed was saved by grains at a time, and was hoarded with as much avarice as ever was a miser's:—to bring it here I have come a thousand miles, and now, alas, I find him thus!"

I laid the box on the table, and was retiring with a lingering step. The eye of the invalid was caught by it, as that of a child by a glittering toy, and with infantine impatience he faltered out inquiries of his niece. With gentle mildness she repeated again and again who I was, and why I came, etc. I was about to turn, and hasten from a scene so painful, when the physician laid his hand on my sleeve—"Stop," he said, "there is a change."

There was indeed, and a marked one. A faint glow spread over his pallid features—they seemed to gain the look of intelligence which belongs to vitality—his eye once more kindled—his lip colored—and drawing himself up out of the listless posture he had hitherto maintained, he rose without assistance. The doctor and the servant ran to give him their support. He waved them aside, and they were contented to place themselves in such a position behind as might ensure against accident, should his newly acquired strength decay as suddenly as it had revived.

"My dear Croftangry," he said, in the tone of kindness of other days, "I am glad to see you returned—You find me but poorly—but my little niece here and Dr. — are very kind—God bless you, my dear friend! we shall not meet again till we meet in a better world."

I pressed his extended hand to my lips—I pressed it to my bosom—I would fain have flung myself on my knees; but the doctor, leaving the patient to the young lady and the servant, who wheeled forward his chair, and were replacing him in it, hurried me out of the room. "My dear sir," he said, "you ought to be satisfied; you have seen our poor invalid more like his former self than he has been for months, or than he may be perhaps again until all is over. The whole Faculty could not have assured such an interval—I must see whether anything

can be derived from it to improve the general health—*Pray, begone.*” The last argument hurried me from the spot, agitated by a crowd of feelings, all of them painful.

When I had overcome the shock of this great disappointment, I renewed gradually my acquaintance with one or two old companions, who, though of infinitely less interest to my feelings than my unfortunate friend, served to relieve the pressure of actual solitude, and who were not perhaps the less open to my advances, that I was a bachelor somewhat stricken in years, newly arrived from foreign parts, and certainly independent, if not wealthy.

I was considered as a tolerable subject of speculation by some, and I could not be burdensome to any; I was therefore, according to the ordinary rule of Edinburgh hospitality, a welcome guest in several respectable families; but I found no one who could replace the loss I had sustained in my best friend and benefactor. I wanted something more than mere companionship could give me, and where was I to look for it?—among the scattered remnants of those that had been my gay friends of yore?—alas!

Many a lad I loved was dead,
And many a lass grown old.

Besides all community of ties between us had ceased to exist, and such of former friends as were still in the world, held their life in a different tenor from what I did.

Some had become misers, and were as eager in saving sixpence as ever they had been in spending a guinea. Some had turned agriculturists—their talk was of oxen, and they were only fit companions for graziers. Some stuck to cards, and though no longer deep gamblers, rather played small game than sat out. This I particularly despised. The strong impulse of gaming, alas! I had felt in my time—it is as intense as it is criminal; but it produces excitation and interest, and I can conceive how it should become a passion with strong and powerful minds. But to dribble away life in exchanging bits of painted pasteboard round a green table, for the piddling concern of a few shillings, can only be excused in folly or superannuation. It is like riding on a rocking-horse, where your utmost exertion never carries you a foot forward; it is a kind of mental treadmill, where you are perpetually climbing, but can never rise an inch. From these hints, my readers will perceive I am incapacitated for one of the pleasures of old age, which, though not mentioned by Cicero, is not the least

frequent resource in the present day,—the club-room, and the snug hand at whist.

To return to my old companions : Some frequented public assemblies, like the ghost of Beau Nash, or any other beau of half-a-century back, thrust aside by tittering youth, and pitied by those of their own age. In fine, some went into devotion, as the French term it, and others, I fear, went to the devil ; a few found resources in science and letters ; one or two turned philosophers in a small way, peeped into microscopes, and became familiar with the fashionable experiments of the day. Some took to reading, and I was one of them.

Some grains of repulsion toward the society around me—some painful recollections of early faults and follies—some touch of displeasure with living mankind, inclined me rather to a study of antiquities, and particularly those of my own country. The reader, if I can prevail on myself to continue the present work, will probably be able to judge, in the course of it, whether I have made any useful progress in the study of the olden times.

I owed this turn of study, in part, to the conversation of my kind man of business, Mr. Fairscribe, whom I mentioned as having seconded the efforts of my invaluable friend, in bringing the cause on which my liberty and the remnant of my property depended, to a favorable decision. He had given me a most kind reception on my return. He was too much engaged in his profession for me to intrude on him often, and perhaps his mind was too much trammelled with its details to permit his being willingly withdrawn from them. In short, he was not a person of my poor friend Sommerville's expanded spirit, and rather a lawyer of the ordinary class of formalists ; but a most able and excellent man. When my estate was sold, he retained some of the older title-deeds, arguing, from his own feelings, that they would be of more consequence to the heir of the old family than to the new purchaser. And when I returned to Edinburgh, and found him still in the exercise of the profession to which he was an honor, he sent to my lodgings the old family Bible, which lay always on my father's table, two or three other mouldy volumes, and a couple of sheep-skin bags, full of parchment and papers whose appearance was by no means inviting.

The next time I shared Mr. Fairscribe's hospitable dinner, I failed not to return him due thanks for his kindness, which acknowledgment, indeed, I proportioned rather to the idea which I knew he entertained of the value of such things, than to the interest with which I myself regarded them. But the

conversation turning on my family, who were old proprietors in the Upper Ward of Clydesdale, gradually excited some interest in my mind; and when I retired to my solitary parlor, the first thing I did was to look for a pedigree, or a sort of history of the family, or House of Croftangry, once of that ilk, latterly of Glentanner. The discoveries which I made shall enrich the next chapter.

CHAPTER SECOND.

IN WHICH MR. CROFTANGRY CONTINUES HIS STORY.

“What’s property, dear Swift? I see it alter
From you to me, from me to Peter Walter.”

POPE.

“CROFTANGRY—Croftangrew—Croftanridge—Croftandgrey—for sa mony wise hath the name been spellit—is weel known to be ane house of grit antiquity; and it is said that King Milcolumb, or Malcolm, being the first of our Scottish princes quha removit across the Firth of Forth, did reside and occupy ane palace at Edinburgh, and had there ane valziant man, who did him man-service, by keeping the croft, or corn land, which was tilled for the convenience of the King’s household, and was thence callet Croft-an-righ, that is to say, the King his croft; quhilk place, though now coverit with biggins, is to this day called Croftangry, and lyeth near to the royal palace. And whereas that some of those who bear this auld and honorable name may take scorn that it ariseth from the tilling of the ground, quhilk men account a slavish occupation, yet we ought to honor the pleugh and spade, seeing we all derive our being from our father Adam, whose lot it became to cultivate the earth, in respect of his fall and transgression.

“Also we have witness, as weel in holy writt as in profane history, of the honor in quhilk husbandrie was held of old, and how prophets have been taken from the pleugh, and great captains raised up to defend their ain countries, sic as Cincinnatus, and the like, who fought not the common enemy with the less valiancy that their arms had been exercised in halding the stilts of the pleugh, and their billicose skill in driving of yaulds and owsen.

“Likewise there are sindry honorable families, quhilk are

now of our native Scottish nobility, and have clombe higher up the brae of preferment than what this house of Croftangry hath done, quhilk shame not to carry in their warlike shield and insignia of dignity, the tools and implements the quhilk their first forefathers exercised in laboring the croft-rig, or, as the poet Virgilius calleth it eloquently, in subduing the soil. And no doubt this ancient house of Croftangry, while it continued to be called of that Ilk, produced many worshipful and famous patriots, of quhom I now prætermit the names; it being my purpose, if God shall spare me life for sic an pious officium, or duty to resume the first part of my narrative touching the house of Croftangry, when I can set down at length the evidents, and historical witness anent the facts which I shall allege, seeing that words, when they are unsupported by proofs, are like seed sown on the naked rocks, or like an house biggit on the flitting and faithless sands."

Here I stopped to draw breath; for the style of my grandsire, the inditer of this goodly matter, was rather lengthy, as our American friends say. Indeed, I reserve the rest of the piece until I can obtain admission to the Bannatyne Club,* when I propose to throw off an edition, limited according to the rules of that erudite Society, with a facsimile of the manuscript, emblazonry of the family arms, surrounded by their quartering, and a handsome disclamation of family pride, with *Hæc nos novimus esse nihil*, or *Vix ea nostra voco*.

In the meantime, to speak truth, I cannot but suspect, that though my worthy ancestor puffed vigorously to swell up the dignity of his family, we have never, in fact, risen above the rank of middling proprietors. The estate of Glantanner came to us by the intermarriage of my ancestor with Tib Sommeril, termed by the Southrons Sommerville,† a daughter of that noble house, but I fear on what my great-grandsire calls "the wrong side of the blanket." Her husband, Gilbert, was killed fight-

* This Club of which the Author of Waverley has the honor to be President, was instituted in February 1823, for the purpose of printing and publishing works illustrative of the history, literature, and antiquities of Scotland. It continues to prosper, and has already rescued from oblivion many curious materials of Scottish History. [The Bannatyne Club was dissolved in 1861. See the volume of "Adversaria," presented in 1867 to the members by Mr. Laing, the secretary.]

† The ancient Norman family of the Sommervilles came into this island with William the Conqueror, and established one branch in Gloucestershire, another in Scotland. After the lapse of 700 years, the remaining possessions of these two branches were united in the person of the late Lord Sommerville, on the death of his English kinsman, the well-known author of "The Chase."

ing as the *Inquisitio post mortem* has it, "*sub vexillo regis, apud prælium juxta Branxton, LIE Floddenfield.*"

We had our share in other national misfortunes—were forfeited, like Sir John Colville of the Dale, for following our betters to the field of Langside; and, in the contentious times of the last Stewarts, we were severely fined for harboring and resetting intercommuned ministers; and narrowly escaped giving a martyr to the Calendar of the Covenant, in the person of the father of our family historian. He "took the sheaf from the mare," however, as the MS. expresses it, and agreed to accept of the terms of pardon offered by government, and sign the bond, in evidence he would give no further ground of offence. My grandsire glosses over his father's backsliding as smoothly as he can, and comforts himself with ascribing his want of resolution to his unwillingness to wreck the ancient name and family, and to permit his lands and lineage to fall under a doom of forfeiture.

"And indeed," said the venerable compiler, "as, praised be God, we seldom meet in Scotland with these belly-gods and voluptuaries, whilk are unnatural enough to devour their patrimony bequeathed to them by their forbears in chambering and wantonness, so that they come, with the prodigal son, to the husks and the swine-trough; and as I have the less to dreid the existence of such unnatural Neroes in mine own family to devour the substance of their own house like brute beasts out of mere gluttonie and Epicurishnesse, so I need only warn mine descendants against over hastily meddling with the mutations in state and in religion, which have been near-hand to the bringing this poor house of Croftangry to perdition, as we have shown more than once. And albeit I would not that my successors sat still altogether when called on by their duty to Kirk and King; yet I would have them wait till stronger and wealthier men than themselves were up, so that either they may have the better chance of getting through the day; or, failing of that, the conquering party having some fatter quarry to live upon, like gorged hawks, spare the smaller game."

There was something in this conclusion which at first reading piqued me extremely, and I was so unnatural as to curse the whole concern, as poor, bald, pitiful trash, in which a silly old man was saying a great deal about nothing at all. Nay, my first impression was to thrust it into the fire, the rather that it reminded me, in no very flattering manner, of the loss of the family property, to which the compiler of the history was so much attached, in the very manner which he most severely repro-
bated. It even seemed to my aggrieved feelings, that his

unprescient gaze on futurity, in which he could not anticipate the folly of one of his descendants, who should throw away the whole inheritance in a few years of idle expense and folly, was meant as a personal incivility to myself, though written fifty or sixty years before I was born.

A little reflection made me ashamed of this feeling of impatience, and as I looked at the even, concise, yet tremulous hand in which the manuscript was written, I could not help thinking, according to an opinion I have heard seriously maintained, that something of a man's character may be conjectured from his handwriting. That neat, but crowded and constrained small hand, argued a man of a good conscience, well-regulated passions, and, to use his own phrase, an upright walk in life; but it also indicated narrowness of spirit, inveterate prejudice, and hinted at some degree of intolerance, which, though not natural to the disposition, had arisen out of a limited education. The passages from Scripture and the classics, rather profusely than happily introduced, and written in a half-text character to mark their importance, illustrated that peculiar sort of pedantry, which always considered the argument as gained, if secured by a quotation. Then the flourished capital letters, which ornamented the commencement of each paragraph, and the name of his family and of his ancestors, whenever these occurred in the page, do they not express forcibly the pride and sense of importance with which the author undertook and accomplished his task? I persuaded myself, the whole was so complete a portrait of the man, that it would not have been a more undutiful act to have defaced his picture, or even to have disturbed his bones in his coffin, than to destroy his manuscript. I thought, for a moment, of presenting it to Mr. Fairscribe; but that confounded passage about the prodigal and swine-trough—I settled at last it was as well to lock it up in my own bureau, with the intention to look at it no more.

But I do not know how it was, that the subject began to sit nearer my heart than I was aware of, and I found myself repeatedly engaged in reading descriptions of farms which were no longer mine, and boundaries which marked the property of others. A love of the *natale solum*, if Swift be right in translating these words "family estate," began to awaken in my bosom; the recollections of my own youth adding little to it, save what was connected with field-sports. A career of pleasure is unfavorable for acquiring a taste for natural beauty, and still more so for forming associations of a sentimental kind, connecting us with the inanimate objects around us,

I had thought little about my estate, while I possessed and was wasting it, unless as affording the rude materials out of which a certain inferior race of creatures, called tenants, were bound to produce (in a greater quantity than they actually did) a certain return called rent, which was destined to supply my expenses. This was my general view of the matter. Of particular places, I recollected that Garval Hill was a famous piece of rough upland pasture, for rearing young colts, and teaching them to throw their feet—that Minion Burn had the finest yellow trout in the country,—that Seggycleugh was unequaled for woodcocks—that Bengibbert Moors afforded excellent moorfowl-shooting, and that the clear bubbling fountain called the Harper's Well was the best recipe in the world on a morning after a *Hard-go* with my neighbor fox-hunters. Still these ideas recalled, by degrees, pictures, of which I had since learned to appreciate the merit—scenes of silent loneliness, where extensive moors, undulating into wild hills, were only disturbed by the whistle of the plover, or the crow of the heath-cock ; wild ravines creeping up into mountains, filled with natural wood, and which, when traced downward along the path formed by shepherds and nutters, were found gradually to enlarge and deepen, as each formed a channel to its own brook, sometimes bordered by steep banks of earth, often with the more romantic boundary of naked rocks or cliffs, crested with oak, mountain-ash, and hazel,—all gratifying the eye the more that the scenery was, from the bare nature of the country around, totally unexpected.

I had recollections, too, of fair and fertile holms, or level plains, extending between the wooded banks and the bold stream of the Clyde, which, colored like pure amber, or rather having the hue of the pebbles called Cairngorm, rushes over sheets of rock and beds of gravel, inspiring a species of awe from the few and faithless fords which it presents, and the frequency of fatal accidents, now diminished by the number of bridges. These alluvial holms were frequently bordered by triple and quadruple rows of large trees, which gracefully marked their boundary, and dipped their long arms into the foaming stream of the river. Other places I remembered, which had been described by the old huntsman as the lodge of tremendous wild-cats, or the spot where tradition stated the mighty stag to have been brought to bay, or where heroes, whose might was now as much forgotten, were said to have been slain by surprise, or in battle.

It is not to be supposed that these finished landscapes became visible before the eyes of my imagination, as the scenery

of the stage is disclosed by the rising of the curtain. I have said, that I had looked upon the country around me, during the hurried and dissipated period of my life, with the eyes indeed of my body, but without those of my understanding. It was piece by piece, as a child picks out its lesson, that I began to recollect the beauties of nature which had once surrounded me in the home of my forefathers. A natural taste for them must have lurked at the bottom of my heart, which awakened when I was in foreign countries, and becoming by degrees a favorite passion, gradually turned its eyes inward, and ransacked the neglected stores which my memory had involuntarily recorded, and when excited, exerted herself to collect and to complete.

I began now to regret more bitterly than ever the having fooled away my family property, the care and improvement of which, I saw, might have afforded an agreeable employment for my leisure, which only went to brood on past misfortunes, and increase useless repining. "Had but a single farm been reserved, however small," said I, one day to Mr. Fairscribe, "I should have had a place I could call my home, and something that I could call business."

"It might have been managed," answered Fairscribe; "and for my part I inclined to keep the mansion-house, mains, and some of the old family acres together; but both Mr. — and you were of opinion that the money would be more useful."

"True, true, my good friend," said I, "I was a fool then, and did not think I could incline to be Glentanner with £200 or £300 a-year, instead of Glentanner with as many thousands. I was then a haughty, pettish, ignorant, dissipated, broken-down Scottish laird; and thinking my imaginary consequence altogether ruined, I cared not how soon, or how absolutely, I was rid of everything that recalled it to my own memory, or that of others."

And now it is like you have changed your mind?" said Fairscribe. "Well, fortune is apt to circumduce the term upon us; but I think she may allow you to revise your condescendence."

"How do you mean, my good friend?"

"Nay," said Fairscribe, "there is ill luck in averring till one is sure of his facts. I will look back on a file of newspapers, and to-morrow you shall hear from me; come, help yourself—I have seen you fill your glass higher."

"And shall see it again," said I, pouring out what remained of our bottle of claret; "the wine is capital, and so shall our toast be—To your fireside, my good friend. And now we shall

go beg a Scots song, without foreign graces, from my little siren Miss Katie."

The next day accordingly I received a parcel from Mr. Fairscribe with a newspaper enclosed, among the advertisements of which, one was marked with a cross as requiring my attention. I read to my surprise—

"DESIRABLE ESTATE FOR SALE.

"By order of the Lords of Council and Session, will be exposed to sale in the New Sessions House of Edinburgh, on Wednesday, the 25th November 18—, all and whole the lands and barony of Glentanner, now called Castle Treddles, lying in the Middle Ward of Clydesdale, and shire of Lanark, with the teinds, parsonage and vicarage, fishings in the Clyde, woods, mosses, moors, and pasturages," etc. etc.

The advertisement went on to set forth the advantages of the soil, situation, natural beauties, and capabilities of improvement, not forgetting its being a freehold estate, with the particular polypus capacity of being sliced up into two, three, or, with a little assistance, four freehold qualifications, and a hint that the county was likely to be eagerly contested between two great families. The upset price at which "the said lands and barony and others" were to be exposed was thirty years' purchase of the proven rental, which was about a fourth more than the property had fetched at the last sale. This, which was mentioned, I suppose, to show the improvable character of the land, would have given another some pain; but let me speak truth of myself in good as in evil—it pained not me. I was only angry that Fairscribe, who knew something generally of the extent of my funds, should have tantalized me by sending me information that my family property was in the market, since he must have known that the price was far out of my reach.

But a letter dropped from the parcel on the floor, which attracted my eye, and explained the riddle. A client of Mr. Fairscribe's, a moneyed man, thought of buying Glentanner, merely as an investment of money—it was even unlikely he would ever see it; and so, the price of the whole being some thousand pounds beyond what cash he had on hand, this accommodating Dives would gladly take a partner in the sale for any detached farm, and would make no objection to its including the most desirable part of the estate in point of beauty, provided the price was made adequate. Mr. Fairscribe would take care I was not imposed on in the matter, and said in his

card, he believed, if I really wished to make such a purchase, I had better go out and look at the premises, advising me, at the same time, to keep a strict incognito; an advice somewhat superfluous, since I am naturally of a reserved disposition.

CHAPTER THIRD.

MR. CROFTANGRY, INTER ALIA, REVISITS GLENTANNER.

Then sing of stage-coaches,
And fear no reproaches
For riding in one;
But daily be jogging,
Whilst, whistling and flogging,
Whilst, whistling and flogging,
The coachman drives on.

FARQUHAR.

DISGUISED in a gray surtout which had seen service, a white castor on my head, and a stout Indian cane in my hand, the next week saw me on the top of a mail-coach driving to the westward.

I like mail-coaches, and I hate them. I like them for my convenience, but I detest them for setting the whole world a-gadding instead of sitting quietly still minding their own business, and preserving the stamp of originality of character which nature or education may have impressed on them. Off they go, jingling against each other in the rattling vehicle till they have no more variety of stamp in them than so many smooth shillings—the save even in their Welsh wigs and great-coats, each without more individuality than belongs to a partner of the company, as the waiter calls them, of the North coach.

Worthy Mr. Piper, best of contractors who ever furnished four frampal jades for public use, I bless you when I set out on a journey myself; the neat coaches under your contract render the intercourse, from Johnnie Groat's House to Ladykirk and Cornhill Bridge, safe, pleasant, and cheap. But, Mr. Piper, you who are a shrewd arithmetician, did it never occur to you to calculate how many fools' heads, which might have produced an idea or two in the year, if suffered to remain in quiet, get effectually addled by jolting to and fro in these flying chariots of yours; how many decent countrymen become conceited bumpkins after a cattle-show dinner in the capital, which they could

not have attended save for your means; how many decent country parsons return critics and spouters by way of importing the newest taste from Edinburgh? And how will your conscience answer one day for carrying so many bonny lasses to barter modesty for conceit and levity at the Metropolitan Vanity Fair?

Consider, too, the low rate to which you reduce human intellect. I do not believe your habitual customers have their ideas more enlarged than one of your coach-horses. They *knows the road*, like the English postilion, and they know nothing beside. They date, like the carriers at Gadshill, from the death of John Ostler; * the succession of guards forms a dynasty in their eyes; coachmen are their ministers of state, and an upset is to them a greater incident than a change of administration. Their only point of interest on the road is to save the time, and see whether the coach keeps the hour. This is surely a miserable degradation of human intellect. Take my advice, my good sir, and disinterestedly contrive that once or twice a-quarter your most dexterous whip shall overturn a coachful of the superfluous travelers, *in terrorem* to those who, as Horace says, "delight in the dust raised by your chariots."

Your current and customary mail-coach passenger, too, gets abominably selfish, schemes successfully for the best seat, the freshest egg, the right cut of the sirloin. The mode of traveling is death to all the courtesies and kindnesses of life, and goes a great way to demoralize the character, and cause it to retrograde to barbarism. You allow us excellent dinners, but only twenty minutes to eat them; and what is the consequence? Bashful beauty sits on the one side of us, timid childhood on the other; respectable, yet somewhat feeble old age is placed on our front; and all require those acts of politeness which ought to put every degree upon a level at the convivial board. But have we time—we the strong and active of the party—to perform the duties of the table to the more retired and bashful, to whom these little attentions are due? The lady should be pressed to her chicken—the old man helped to his favorite and tender slice—the child to his tart. But not a fraction of a minute have we to bestow on any other person than ourselves; and the *prut-prut—tut-tut* of the guard's discordant note, summons us to the coach, the weaker party having gone without their dinner, and the able-bodied and active threatened with indigestion, from having swallowed victuals like a Lei'stershire clown bolting bacon.

* See the opening scene of the first part of Shakspeare's *Henry IV.*

On the memorable occasion I am speaking of I lost my breakfast, sheerly from obeying the commands of a respectable-looking old lady, who once required me to ring the bell, and another time to help the tea-kettle. I have some reason to think she was literally an *old Stager*, who laughed in her sleeve at my complaisance ; so that I have sworn in my secret soul revenge upon her sex, and all such errant damsels of whatever age and degree, whom I may encounter in my travels. I mean all this without the least ill-will to my friend the contractor, who, I think, has approached as near as any one is like to do toward accomplishing the modest wish of the Amatus and Amata of the Peri Bathous,

Ye gods, annihilate but time and space,
And make two lovers happy

I intend to give Mr. P. his full revenge when I come to discuss the more recent enormity of steamboats ; meanwhile I shall only say of both these modes of conveyance, that

There is no living with them or without them.

I am perhaps more critical on the —— mail-coach on this particular occasion, that I did not meet all the respect from the worshipful company in his Majesty's carriage that I think I was entitled to. I must say it for myself, that I bear, in my own opinion at least, not a vulgar point about me. My face has seen service, but there is still a good set of teeth, an aquiline nose, and a quick gray eye, set a little too deep under the eyebrow ; and a cue of the kind once called military, may serve to show that my civil occupations have been sometimes mixed with those of war. Nevertheless, two idle young fellows in the vehicle, or rather on the top of it, were so much amused with the deliberation which I used in ascending to the same place of eminence, that I thought I should have been obliged to pull them up a little. And I was in no good humor, at an unsuppressed laugh following my descent, when set down at the angle, where a cross road, striking off from the main one, led me toward Glentanner, from which I was still nearly five miles distant.

It was old-fashioned road, which, preferring ascents to sloughs, was led in a straight line over height and hollow, through moor and dale. Every object around me, as I passed them in succession, reminded me of old days, and at the same time formed the strongest contrast with them possible. Unattended, on foot, with a small bundle in my hand, deemed scarce

sufficient good company for the two shabby genteels with whom I had been lately perched on the top of a mail-coach, I did not seem to be the same person with the young prodigal who lived with the noblest and gayest in the land, and who, thirty years before, would, in the same country, have been on the back of a horse that had been victor for a plate, or smoking along in his traveling chaise-and-four. My sentiments were not less changed than my condition. I could quite well remember, that my ruling sensation in the days of heady youth, was a mere school-boy's eagerness to get furthest forward in the race in which I had engaged; to drink as many bottles as —; to be thought as good a judge of a horse as —; to have the knowing cut of —'s jacket. These were thy gods, O Israel!

Now I was a mere looker-on; seldom an unmoved, and sometimes an angry spectator, but still a spectator only, of the pursuits of mankind. I felt how little my opinion was valued by those engaged in the busy turmoil, yet I exercised it with the profusion of an old lawyer retired from his profession, who thrusts himself into his neighbor's affairs, and gives advice where it is not wanted, merely under pretence of loving the crack of the whip.

I came amid these reflections to the brow of a hill, from which I expected to see Glentanner; a modest-looking yet comfortable house, its walls covered with the most productive fruit-trees in that part of the country, and screened from the most stormy quarters of the horizon by a deep and ancient wood which overhung the neighboring hill. The house was gone; a great part of the wood was felled; and instead of the gentleman-like mansion, shrouded and embosomed among its old hereditary trees, stood Castle Treddles, a huge lumping four-square pile of freestone, as bare as my nail, except for a paltry edging of decayed and lingering exotics, with an impoverished lawn stretched before it, which, instead of boasting deep green tapestry, enameled with daisies, and with crow's-foot and cowslips, showed an extent of nakedness, raked indeed, and leveled, but where the sown grasses had failed with drought, and the earth, retaining its natural complexion, seemed nearly as brown and bare as when it was newly dug up.

The house was a large fabric, which pretended to its name of Castle only from the front windows being finished in acute Gothic arches (being by the way, the very reverse of the castelated style), and each angle graced with a turret about the size of a pepper-box. In every other respect it resembled a large town-house, which, like a fat burgess, had taken a walk

to the country on a holiday, and climbed to the top of an eminence to look around it. The bright red color of the freestone, the size of the building, the formality of its shape, and awkwardness of its position, harmonized as ill with the sweeping Clyde in front, and a bubbling brook which danced down on the right, as the fat civic form, with bushy wig, gold-headed cane, maroon-colored coat, and mottled silk stockings, would have accorded with the wild and magnificent scenery of Core-house Linn.

I went up to the house. It was in that state of desertion which is perhaps the most unpleasant to look on, for the place was going to decay, without having been inhabited. There were about the mansion, though deserted, none of the slow mouldering touches of time, which communicate to buildings, as to the human frame, a sort of reverence, while depriving them of beauty and of strength. The disconcerted schemes of the Laird of Castle Treddles had resembled fruit that becomes decayed without ever having ripened. Some windows broken, others patched, others blocked up with deals, gave a disconsolate air to all around, and seemed to say, "There Vanity had purposed to fix her seat, but was anticipated by Poverty."

To the inside, after many a vain summons, I was at length admitted by an old laborer. The house contained every contrivance for luxury and accommodation;—the kitchens were a model, and there were hot closets on the office staircase, that the dishes might not cool, as our Scottish phrase goes, between the kitchen and the hall. But instead of the genial smell of good cheer, these temples of Comus emitted the damp odor of sepulchral vaults, and the large cabinets of cast-iron looked like the cages of some feudal Bastile. The eating-room and drawing-room, with an interior boudoir, were magnificent apartments, the ceilings fretted and adorned with stucco-work, which already was broken in many places, and looked in others damp and mouldering; the wood paneling was shrunk and warped, and cracked; the doors, which had not been hung for more than two years, were, nevertheless, already swinging loose from their hinges. Desolation, in short, was where enjoyment had never been; and the want of all the usual means to preserve was fast performing the work of decay.

The story was a common one, and told in a few words. Mr. Treddles senior, who bought the estate, was a cautious money making person; his son, still embarked in commercial speculations, desired at the same time to enjoy his opulence and to increase it. He incurred great expenses, amongst which this edifice was to be numbered. To support this he speculated

boldly, and unfortunately ; and thus the whole history is told, which may serve for more places than Glentanner.

Strange and various feelings ran through my bosom, as I loitered in these deserted apartments, scarce hearing what my guide said to me about the size and destination of each room. The first sentiment, I am ashamed to say, was one of gratified spite. My patrician pride was pleased, that the mechanic, who had not thought the house of the Croftangrys sufficiently good for him, had now experienced a fall in his turn. My next thought was as mean, though not so malicious. "I have had the better of this fellow," thought I ; "if I lost the estate, I at least spent the price ; and Mr. Treddles has lost his among paltry commercial engagements."

"Wretch !" said the secret voice within, "darest thou exult in thy shame ? Recollect how thy youth and fortune were wasted in those years, and triumph not in the enjoyment of an existence which leveled thee with the beasts that perish. Be-think thee how this poor man's vanity gave at least bread to the laborer, peasant, and citizen ; and his profuse expenditure, like water spilt on the ground, refreshed the lovely herbs and plants where it fell. But thou ! whom hast thou enriched, during thy career of extravagance, save those brokers of the devil, vintners, panders, gamblers, and horse-jockeys ?" The anguish produced by this self-reproof was so strong, that I put my hand suddenly to my forehead, and was obliged to allege a sudden megrim to my attendant, in apology for the action, and a slight groan with which it was accompanied.

I then made an effort to turn my thoughts into a more philosophical current, and muttered half aloud, as a charm to lull any more painful thoughts to rest—

*Nunc ager Umbreni sub nomine, nuper Ofelli
Dictus, erit nulli proprius ; sed cedit in usum
Nunc mihi, nunc alii. Quocirca vivite fortes,
Fortiaque adversis opponite pectora rebus.**

* HORACE, Sat. II. Lib. 2. The meaning will be best conveyed to the English reader in Pope's imitation :—

What's property, dear Swift ? you see it alter
From you to me, from me to Peter Walter ;
Or in a mortgage prove a lawyer's share
Or in a jointure vanish from the heir.

Shades, that to Bacon could retreat afford,
Become the portion of a booby lord ;
And Helmsley, once proud Buckingham's delight,
Slides to a scrivener and city knight.
Let lands and houses have what lords they will,
Let us be fix'd, and our own masters still.

In my anxiety to fix the philosophical precept in my mind, I recited the last line aloud, which, joined to my previous agitation, I afterward found became the cause of a report, that a mad schoolmaster had come from Edinburgh, with the idea in his head of buying Castle Treddles.

As I saw my companion was desirous of getting rid of me, I asked where I was to find the person in whose hands were left the map of the estate and other particulars connected with the sale. The agent who had this in possession, I was told, lived at the town of —; which I was informed, and indeed knew well, was distant five miles and a bittock, which may pass in a country where they are less lavish of their land, for two or three more. Being somewhat afraid of the fatigue of walking so far, I inquired if a horse, or any sort of a carriage was to be had, and was answered in the negative.

"But," said my cicerone, "you may halt a blink till next morning at the Treddles Arms, a very decent house, scarce a mile off.

"A new house, I suppose?" replied I.

"Na, it's a new public, but it's an auld house; it was aye the Leddy's jointure-house in the Croftangry-folk's time; but Mr. Treddles has fitted it up for the convenience of the country. Poor man, he was a public-spirited man when he had the means."

"Duntarkin a public house!" I exclaimed.

"Ay," said the fellow, surprised at my naming the place by its former title; "ye'll hae been in this country before, I'm thinking?"

"Long since," I replied—"and there is good accommodation at the what-d'ye-call-'em arms, and a civil landlord?" This I said by way of saying something, for the man stared very hard at me.

"Very decent accommodation. Ye'll no be for fashing wi' wine, I'm thinking, and there's walth o' porter, ale, and a drap gude whisky"—(in an undertone)—"Fairntosh, if you can get on the lee-side of the gudewife—for there is nae gudeman—They ca' her Christie Steele."

I almost started at the sound. Christie Steele! Christie Steele was my mother's body servant, her very right hand, and, between ourselves, something like a viceroy over her. I recollected her perfectly; and though she had in former times been no favorite of mine, her name now sounded in my ear like that of a friend, and was the first word I had heard somewhat in unison with the associations around me. I sallied from Castle Treddles, determined to make the best of my way to

Duntarkin, and my cicerone hung by me for a little way, giving loose to his love of talking; an opportunity which, situated as he was, the seneschal of a deserted castle, was not likely to occur frequently.

"Some folk think," said my companion, "that Mr. Treddles might as weel have put my wife as Christie Steele into the Treddles Arms, for Christie had been aye in service, and never in the public line, and so it's like she is ganging back in the world, as I hear—now, my wife had keptit a victualing office."

"That would have been an advantage certainly," I replied.

"But I am no sure that I wad ha' looten Eppie take it, if they had put it in her offer."

"That's a different consideration."

"Ony way, I wadna ha' liked to have offended Mr. Treddles; he was a wee toustie when you rubbed him again the hair—but a kind, weel-meaning man."

I wanted to get rid of this species of chat, and finding myself near the entrance of a footpath which made a short cut to Duntarkin, I put half-a-crown into my guide's hand, bade him good-evening, and plunged into the woods.

"Hout, sir—fie, sir—no from the like of you—stay, sir, ye wunna find the way that gate—Odd's mercy, he maun ken the gate as weel as I do myself—weel, I wad like to ken wha the chield is."

Such were the last words of my guide's drowsy, uninteresting tone of voice; and, glad to be rid of him, I strode out stoutly, in despite of large stones, briars, and *bad steps*, which abounded in the road I had chosen. In the interim, I tried as much as I could, with verses from Horace and Prior, and all who have lauded the mixture of literary with rural life, to call back the visions of last night and this morning, imagining myself settled in some detached farm of the estate of Glentanner,

Which sloping hills around enclose—

Where many a birch and brown oak grows;

when I should have a cottage with a small library, a small cellar, a spare bed for a friend, and live more happy and more honored than when I had the whole barony. But the sight of Castle Treddles had disturbed all my own castles in the air. The realities of the matter, like a stone plashed into a limpid fountain, had destroyed the reflection of the objects around, which, till this act of violence, lay slumbering on the crystal surface, and I tried in vain to re-establish the picture which had been so rudely broken. Well, then, I would try it another way; I would try to get Christie Steele out of her *public*, since

she was not thriving in it, and she who had been my mother's governante should be mine. I knew all her faults, and I told her history over to myself.

She was a grand-daughter, I believe, at least some relative, of the famous Covenanter of the name, whom Dean Swift's friend Captain Creighton, shot on his own staircase in the times of the persecutions,* and had perhaps derived from her native stock much both of its good and evil properties. No one could say of her that she was the life and spirit of the family, though, in my mother's time, she directed all family affairs; her look was austere and gloomy and when she was not displeased with you, you could only find it out by her silence. If there was cause for complaint, real or imaginary, Christie was loud enough. She loved my mother with the devoted attachment of a younger sister, but she was as jealous of her favor to any one else as if she had been the aged husband of a coquetish wife, and as severe in her reprehensions as an abbess over her nuns. The command which she exercised over her, was that, I fear, of a strong and determined over a feeble and more nervous disposition; and though it was used with rigor, yet, to the best of Christie Steele's belief, she was urging her mistress to her best and most becoming course, and would have died rather than have recommended any other. The attachment of this woman was limited to the family of Croftangry, for she had few relations; and a dissolute cousin, whom late in life she had taken as a husband, had long left her a widow.

To me she had ever a strong dislike. Even from my early childhood she was jealous, strange as it may seem, of my interest in my mother's affections; she saw my foibles and vices with abhorrence, and without a grain of allowance; nor did she pardon the weakness of maternal affection, even when, by the death of two brothers, I came to be the only child of a widowed parent. At the time my disorderly conduct induced my mother to leave Glentanner, and retreat to her jointure-house, I always blamed Christie Steele for having influenced her resentment, and prevented her from listening to my vows of amendment, which at times were real and serious, and might, perhaps, have accelerated that change of disposition which has since, I trust, taken place. But Christie regarded me as altogether a doomed and predestinated child of perdition, who was sure to hold on my course, and drag downward whosoever might attempt to afford me support.

* Note B. Steele, the Covenanter.

Still, though I knew such had been Christie's prejudices against me in other days, yet I thought enough of time had since passed away to destroy all of them. I knew that when, through the disorder of my affairs, my mother underwent some temporary inconvenience about money matters, Christie, as a thing of course, stood in the gap, and having sold a small inheritance, which had descended to her, brought the purchase-money to her mistress, with a sense of devotion as deep as that which inspired the Christians of the first age, when they sold all they had, and followed the apostle of the church. I therefore thought that we might, in old Scottish phrase, "let byganes be byganes," and begin upon a new account. Yet I resolved, like a skilful general, to reconnoitre a little before laying down any precise scheme of proceeding, and in the interim I determined to preserve my incognito.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

MR. CROFTANGRY BIDS ADIEU TO CLYDESDALE.

Alas, how changed from what it had once been !
'Twas now degraded to a common inn.

GAY.

AN hour's brisk walking, or thereabouts, placed me in front of Duntarkin, which had also, I found, undergone considerable alterations, though it had not been altogether demolished like the principal mansion. An inn-yard extended before the door of the decent little jointure-house, even amidst the remnants of the holly hedges which had screened the lady's garden. Then a broad, raw-looking, new-made road intruded itself up the little glen, instead of the old horseway, so seldom used that it was almost entirely covered with grass. It is a great enormity of which gentlemen trustees on the highway are sometimes guilty, in adopting the breadth necessary for an avenue to the metropolis, where all that is required is an access to some sequestered and unpopulous district. I do not say anything of the expense ; that the trustees and their constituents may settle as they please. But the destruction of sylvan beauty is great, when the breadth of the road is more than proportioned to the vale through which it runs, and lowers of course the consequence of any objects of wood or water, or broken and varied ground, which might otherwise attract notice, and give pleasure.

A bubbling runnel by the side of one of those modern Appian or Flaminian highways, is but like a kennel,—the little hill is diminished to a hillock,—the romantic hillock to a mole-hill, almost too small for sight.

Such an enormity, however, had destroyed the quiet loneliness of Duntarkin,* and intruded its breadth of dust and gravel, and its associations of pochays and mail-coaches, upon one of the most sequestered spots in the Middle Ward of Clydesdale. The house was old and dilapidated, and looked sorry for itself, as if sensible of a derogation; but the sign was strong and new, and brightly painted, displaying a heraldic shield, three shuttles in a field diapr  , a web partly unfolded for crest, and two stout giants for supporters, each one holding a weaver's beam proper. To have displayed this monstrous emblem on the front of the house might have hazarded bringing down the wall, but for certain would have blocked up one or two windows. It was therefore established independent of the mansion, being displayed in an iron framework, and suspended upon two posts, with as much wood and iron about it as would have builded a brig; and there it hung, creaking, groaning, and screaming in every blast of wind, and frightening for five miles' distance, for aught I know, the nests of thrushes and linnets, the ancient denizens of the little glen.

When I entered the place I was received by Christie Steele herself, who seemed uncertain whether to drop me in the kitchen, or usher me into a separate apartment. As I called for tea, with something rather more substantial than bread and butter, and spoke of supping and sleeping, Christie at last inducted me into the room where she herself had been sitting, probably the only one which had a fire, though the month was October. This answered my plan; and, as she was about to remove her spinning-wheel, I begged she would have the goodness to remain and make my tea, adding, that I liked the sound of the wheel, and desired not to disturb her housewife-thrift in the least.

"I dinna ken, sir,"—she replied in a dry *rev  che* tone, which carried me back twenty years; "I am nane of thae heartsome landleddies that can tell country cracks, and make themsells agreeable; and I was ganging to pit on a fire for you in the Red Room; but if it is your will to stay here, he that pays the lawing maun choose the lodging."

I endeavored to engage her in conversation; but, though she answered with a kind of stiff civility, I could get her into

* [Mr. Lockhart informs us that this demesne is sketched from that of Carmichael, the ancient mansion of the noble family of Hyndford.]

no freedom of discourse, and she began to look at her wheel and at the door more than once, as if she meditated a retreat. I was obliged, therefore, to proceed to some special questions that might have interest for a person, whose ideas were probably of a very bounded description.

I looked round the apartment, being the same in which I had last seen my poor mother. The author of the family history, formerly mentioned, had taken great credit to himself for the improvements he had made in this same jointure-house of Duntarkin, and how, upon his marriage, when his mother took possession of the same as her jointure-house, "to his great charges and expenses he caused box the walls of the great parlor" (in which I was now sitting), "empanel the same, and plaster the roof, finishing the apartment with ane concave chimney, and decorating the same with pictures, and a barometer and thermometer." And in particular, which his good mother used to say she prized above all the rest, he had caused his own portraiture be limned over the mantelpiece by a skilful hand. And, in good faith, there he remained still,—having much the visage which I was disposed to ascribe to him on the evidence of his handwriting,—grim and austere, yet not without a cast of shrewdness and determination; in armor, though he never wore it, I fancy; one hand on an open book, and one resting on the hilt of his sword, though, I dare say, his head never ached with reading nor his limbs with fencing.

"That picture is painted on the wood, madam?" said I.

"Ay, sir, or it's like it would not have been left there. They took a' they could."

"Mr. Treddles's creditors, you mean?" said I.

"Na," replied she, dryly, "the creditors of another family, that sweepit cleaner than this poor man's, because, I fancy, there was less to gather."

"An older family, perhaps, and probably more remembered and regretted than later possessors?"

Christie here settled herself in her seat, and pulled her wheel toward her. I had given her something interesting for her thoughts to dwell upon, and her wheel was a mechanical accompaniment on such occasions, the revolutions of which assisted her in the explanation of her ideas.

"Mair regretted—mair missed?—I liked ane of the auld family very weel, but I winna say that for them a'. How should they be mair missed than the Treddleses? The cotton mill was such a thing for the country! The mair bairns a cottar body had the better; they would make their awn keep frae the time they were five years auld; and a widow, wi'

three or four bairns, was a wealthy woman in the time of the Treddleses."

"But the health of these poor children, my good friend—their education and religious instruction"—

"For health," said Christie, looking gloomily at me, "ye maun ken little of the warld, sir, if ye dinna ken that the health of the poor man's body, as weel as his youth and his strength, are all at the command of the rich man's purse. There never was a trade so unhealthy yet, but men would fight to get wark at it for twa pennies a-day aboon the common wage. But the bairns were reasonably weel cared for, in the way of air and exercise, and a very responsible youth heard them their carritch, and gied them lessons in Reedimadeasy.* Now, what did they ever get before? Maybe on a winter day they wad be called out to beat the wood for cocks or sicklike, and then the starving weans would maybe get a bite of broken bread and maybe no, just as the butler was in humor—that was a' they got."

"They were not, then, a very kind family to the poor, these old possessors?" said I, somewhat bitterly; for I had expected to hear my ancestors' praises recorded, though I certainly despaired of being regaled with my own.

"They werena ill to them, sir, and that is aye something. They were just decent bien bodies;—ony poor creature that had face to beg, got an awmous and welcome; they that were shamefaced gaed by, and twice as welcome. But they keepit an honest walk before God and man, the Croftangrys, and as I said before, if they did little good, they did as little ill. They lifted their rents and spent them, called in their kain and ate them; gaed to the kirk of a Sunday, bowed civilly if folk took aff their bannets as they gaed by, and lookit as black as sin at them that keepit them on."

"These are their arms that you have on the sign?"

"What! on the painted board that is skirling and groaning at the door?—Na, these are Mr. Treddles's arms—though they look as like legs as arms—ill pleased I was at the fule thing, that cost as muckle as would hae repaired the house from the wa' stane to the riggin-tree. But if I am to bide here, I'll hae a decent board wi' a punch-bowl on it."

"Is there a doubt of your staying here, Mrs. Steele?"

"Dinna Mistress me," said the cross old woman, whose fingers were now plying their thrift in a manner which indicated nervous irritation—"there was nae luck in the land since Luckie turned Mistress, and Mistress my Leddy; and as for

* "Reading made Easy," usually so pronounced in Scotland.

staying here, if it concerns you to ken, I may stay if I can pay a hundred pund sterling for the lease, and I may flit if I canna; and so gude-e'en to you, Christie,"—and round went the wheel with much activity.

"And you like the trade of keeping a public house?"

"I can scarce say that," she replied. "But worthy Mr. Prendergast is clear of its lawfulness, and I hae gotten used to it, and made a decent living, though I never make out a fause reckoning, or give ony ane the means to disorder reason, in my house."

"Indeed?" said I; "in that case, there is no wonder you have not made up the hundred pounds to purchase the lease."

"How do you ken," said she sharply, "that I might not have had a hundred punds of my ain fee? If I have it not, I am sure it is my ain faut; and I wunna ca' it faut neither, for it gaed to her wha was weel entitled to a' my service." Again she pulled stoutly at the flax, and the wheel went smartly round.

"This old gentleman," said I, fixing my eye on the painted panel, "seems to have had *his* arms painted as well as Mr. Treddles—that is, if that painting in the corner be a scutcheon."

"Ay, ay,—cushion just sae, they maun a' hae their cushions; there's sma' gentry without that; and so the arms, as they ca' them, of the house of Glentanner may be seen on an auld stane in the west end of the house. But to do them justice, they didna propale sae muckle about them as poor Mr. Treddles did;—it's like they were better used to them."

"Very likely—Are there any of the old family in life, goodwife!"

"No," she replied; then added, after a moment's hesitation—"not that I know of,"—and the wheel, which had intermitted, began again to revolve.

"Gone abroad, perhaps?" I suggested.

She now looked up, and faced me—"No, sir. There were three sons of the last Laird of Glentanner, as he was then called: John and William were hopeful young gentlemen, but they died early—one of a decline, brought on by the mizzles, the other lost his life in a fever. It would hae been lucky for mony ane that Chrystal had gane the same gane."

"Oh—he must have been the young spendthrift that sold the property? Well, but you should not have such an ill-will against him: remember necessity has no law; and then, goodwife, he was not more culpable than Mr. Treddles, whom you are so sorry for,"

"I wish I could think sae, sir, for his mother's sake ; but Mr. Treddles was in trade, and though he had no preceese right to do so, yet there was some warrant for a man being expensive that imagined he was making a mint of money. But this unhappy lad devoured his patrimony, when he kenned that he was living like a ratten in a Dunlap cheese, and diminishing his means at a' hands—I canna bide to think on't." With this she broke out into a snatch of a ballad ; but little of mirth was there either in the tone or the expression :—

" For he did spend, and make an end
Of gear that his forefathers wan ;
Of land and ware he made him bare,
So speak nae mair of the auld gudeman."

"Come, dame," said I, "it is a long lane that has no turning. I will not keep from you that I have heard something of this poor fellow, Chrystal Croftangry. He has sown his wild oats, as they say, and has settled into a steady respectable man."

"And wha tell'd ye that tidings?" said she, looking sharply at me.

"Not perhaps the best judge in the world of his character, for it was himself, dame."

"And if he tell'd you truth, it was a virtue he did not aye use to practice," said Christie.

"The devil!" said I, considerably nettled ; "all the world held him to be a man of honor."

"Ay, ay, he would hae shot ony body wi' his pistols and his guns, that had evened him to be a liar. But if he promised to pay an honest tradesman the next term day, did he keep his word then? And if he promised a puir silly lass to make gude her shame, did he speak truth then? And what is that, but being a liar, and a black-hearted deceitful liar to boot?"

My indignation was rising, but I strove to suppress it ; indeed, I should only have afforded my tormentor a triumph by an angry reply. I partly suspected she began to recognize me ; yet she testified so little emotion, that I could not think my suspicion well founded. I went on therefore, to say, in a tone as indifferent as I could command, "Well, goodwife, I see you will believe no good of this Chrystal of yours, till he comes back and buys a good farm on the estate, and makes you his housekeeper."

The old woman dropped her thread, folded her hands, as she looked up to heaven with a face of apprehension. "The Lord," she exclaimed, "forbid ! The Lord in his mercy forbid !

Oh, sir, if you really know this unlucky man, persuade him to settle where folk ken the good that you say he has come to, and dinna ken the evil of his former days. He used to be proud enough—Oh, dinna let him come here, even for his own sake.—He used ance to have some pride.”

Here she once more drew the wheel close to her, and began to pull at the flax with both hands—“Dinna let him come here, to be looked down upon by ony that may be left of his auld reiving companions, and to see the decent folk that he looked over his nose at look over their noses at him, baith at kirk and market. Dinna let him come to his ain country to be made a tale about when ony neighbor points him out to another, and tells what he is, and what he was, and how he wrecked a dainty estate, and brought harlots to the door-cheek of his father’s house, till he made it nae residence for his mother; and how it had been foretauld by a servant of his ain house, that he was a ne’er-do-weel, and a child of perdition, and how her words were made good, and ”——

“Stop there, goodwife, if you please,” said I; “you have said as much as I can well remember, and more than it may be safe to repeat. I can use a great deal of freedom with the gentleman we speak of; but I think were any other person to carry him half of your message, I would scarce ensure his personal safety. And now, as I see the night is settled to be a fine one, I will walk on to ——, where I must meet a coach to-morrow, as it passes to Edinburgh.”

So saying, I paid my moderate reckoning, and took my leave, without being able to discover whether the prejudiced and hard-hearted old woman did, or did not, suspect the identity of her guest with the Chrystal Croftangry against whom she harbored so much dislike.

The night was fine and frosty, though, when I pretended to see what its character was, it might have rained like the deluge. I only made the excuse to escape from old Christie Steele. The horses which run races in the Corso at Rome without any riders, in order to stimulate their exertion, carry each his own spurs, namely, small balls of steel, with sharp projecting spikes, which are attached to loose straps of leather, and flying about in the violence of the agitation, keep the horse to his speed by pricking him as they strike against his flanks. The old woman’s reproaches had the same effect on me, and urged me to a rapid pace, as if it had been possible to escape from my own recollections. In the best days of my life, when I won one or two hard walking matches, I doubt if I ever walked so fast as I did betwixt the Treddles Arms and the borough town for which I

was bound. Though the night was cold, I was warm enough by the time I got to my inn; and it required a refreshing draught of porter, with half-an-hour's repose, ere I could determine to give no further thought to Christie and her opinions, than those of any other vulgar prejudiced old woman. I resolved at last to treat the thing *en bagatelle*, and calling for writing materials, I folded up a check for £100, with these lines on the envelope :—

“ Chrystal, the ne'er-do-weel,
Child destined to the deil,
Sends this to Christie Steele.”

And I was so much pleased with this new mode of viewing the subject, that I regretted the lateness of the hour prevented my finding a person to carry the letter express to its destination.

“ But with the morning cool reflection came.”

I considered that the money, and probably more, was actually due by me on my mother's account to Christie, who had lent it in a moment of great necessity, and that the returning it in a light or ludicrous manner was not unlikely to prevent so touchy and punctilious a person from accepting a debt which was most justly her due, and which it became me particularly to see satisfied. Sacrificing then my triad with little regret (for it looked better by candle-light, and through the medium of a pot of porter, than it did by daylight, and with bohea for a menstruum), I determined to employ Mr. Fairscribe's mediation in buying up the lease of the little inn, and conferring it upon Christie in the way which should make it most acceptable to her feelings. It is only necessary to add, that my plan succeeded, and that Widow Steele even yet keeps the Treddles Arms. Do not say, therefore, that I have been disingenuous with you, reader; since, if I have not told all the ill of myself I might have done, I have indicated to you a person able and willing to supply the blank by relating all my delinquencies, as well as my misfortunes.

In the meantime, I totally abandoned the idea of redeeming any part of my paternal property, and resolved to take Christie Steele's advice, as young Norval does Glenalvon's, “ although it sounded harshly.”

CHAPTER FIFTH.

MR. CROFTANGRY SETTLES IN THE CANONGATE.

— If you will know my house,
'Tis at the tuft of olives here hard by.
AS YOU LIKE IT.

By a revolution of humor which I am unable to account for, I changed my mind entirely on my plans of life, in consequence of the disappointment, the history of which fills the last chapter. I began to discover that the country would not at all suit me : for I had relinquished field-sports, and felt no inclination whatever to farming, the ordinary vocation of country gentlemen ; besides that, I had no talent for assisting either candidate, in case of an expected election, and saw no amusement in the duties of a road-trustee, a commissioner of supply, or even in the magisterial functions of the bench. I had begun to take some taste for reading ; and a domiciliation in the country must remove me from the use of books, except the small subscription library, in which the very book which you want is uniformly sure to be engaged.

I resolved therefore to make the Scottish metropolis my regular resting-place, reserving to myself to take occasionally those excursions, which, spite of all I have said against mail-coaches, Mr. Piper has rendered so easy. Friend of our life and of our leisure, he secures by despatch against loss of time, and by the best of coaches, cattle, and the steadiest of drivers, against hazard of limb, and wafts us, as well as our letters, from Edinburgh to Cape Wrath, in the penning of a paragraph.

When my mind was quite made up to make Auld Reekie my head-quarters, reserving the privilege of *exploring* in all directions, I began to explore in good earnest for the purpose of discovering a suitable habitation. "And whare trew ye I gaed?" as Sir Pertinax says. Not to George's Square—nor to Charlotte Square—nor to the old New Town—nor to the new New Town—nor to the Calton Hill ; I went to the Canongate, and to the very portion of the Canongate in which I had formerly been immured, like the errant knight, prisoner in some enchanted castle, where spells have made the ambient air impervious to the unhappy captive, although the organs of sight encountered no obstacle to his free passage.

Why I should have thought of pitching my tent here I cannot tell. Perhaps it was to enjoy the pleasures of freedom, where I had so long endured the bitterness of restraint; on the principle of the officer, who, after he had retired from the army, ordered his servant to continue to call him at the hour of parade, simply that he might have the pleasure of saying—"D—n the parade!" and turning to the other side to enjoy his slumbers. Or perhaps I expected to find in the vicinity some little old-fashioned house, having somewhat of the *rus in urbe*, which I was ambitious of enjoying. Enough, I went as aforesaid to the Canongate.

I stood by the kennel, of which I have formerly spoken, and, my mind being at ease, my bodily organs were more delicate. I was more sensible than heretofore, that, like the trade of Pompey in Measure for Measure—it did in some sort—pah—an ounce of civet, good apothecary!—Turning from thence, my steps naturally directed themselves to my own humble apartment, where my little Highland landlady, as dapper and as tight as ever (for old women wear a hundred times better than the hard-wrought seniors of the masculine sex), stood at the door *teedling* to herself a Highland song as she shook a table napkin over the forestair, and then proceeded to fold it up neatly for future service.

"How do you, Janet?"

"Thank ye, good sir," answered my old friend, without looking at me; "but ye might as weel say Mrs. MacEvoy, for she is na a'body's Shanet—umph."

"You must be *my* Janet, though, for all that—have you forgot me?—Do you not remember Chrystal Croftangry?"

The light, kind-hearted creature threw her napkin into the open door, skipped down the stair like a fairy, three steps at once, seized me by the hands,—both hands,—jumped up, and actually kissed me. I was a little ashamed; but what swain, of somewhere inclining to sixty, could resist the advances of a fair contemporary? So we allowed the full degree of kindness to the meeting,—*honi soit qui mal y pense*,—and then Janet entered instantly upon business. "An' ye'll gae in, man, and see your auld lodgings, nae doubt, and Shanet will pay ye the fifteen shillings of change that ye ran away without, and without bidding Shanet good-day.—But never mind" (nodding good-humoredly), "Shanet saw you were carried for the time."

By this time we were in my old quarters, and Janet, with her bottle of cordial in one hand and the glass in the other, had forced on me a dram of usquebaugh, distilled with saffron

and other herbs, after some old-fashioned Highland receipt. Then was unfolded, out of many a little scrap of paper, the reserved sum of fifteen shillings, which Janet had treasured for twenty years and upward.

"Here they are," she said, in honest triumph, "just the same I was holding out to ye when ye ran as if ye had been fey. Shanet has had siller, and Shanet has wanted siller, mony a time since that—and the gauger has come, and the factor has come, and the butcher and baker—Cot bless us—just like to tear poor auld Shanet to pieces; but she took good care of Mr. Croftangry's fifteen shillings."

"But what if I had never come back, Janet?"

"Och, if Shanet had heard you were dead, she would hae gien it to the poor of the chapel, to pray for Mr. Croftangry," said Janet, crossing herself, for she was a Catholic;—"you maybe do not think it would do you cood, but the blessing of the poor can never do no harm."

I heartily agree in Janet's conclusion; and, as to have desired her to consider the hoard as her own property, would have been an indelicate return to her for the uprightness of her conduct, I requested her to dispose of it as she had proposed to do in the event of my death, that is, if she knew any poor people of merit to whom it might be useful.

"Ower mony of them," raising the corner of her checked apron to her eyes, "e'en ower money of them, Mr. Croftangry—Och, ay—there is the puir Highland creatures frae Glenshee, that cam down for the harvest, and are lying wi' the fever—five shillings to them, and half-a-crown to Bessie MacEvoy, whose goodman puir creature, died of the frost, being a shairman, for a' the whisky he could drink to keep it out o' his stomach—and"——

But she suddenly interrupted the bead-roll of her proposed charities, and assuming a very sage look, and primming up her little chattering mouth, she went on in a different tone—"But, och, Mr. Croftangry, bethink ye whether ye will not need a' this siller yoursell, and maybe look back and think long for ha'en kiven it away, whilk is a creat sin to forthink a wark o' charity, and also is unlucky, and, moreover, is not the thought of a shentleman's son like yoursell, dear. And I say this, that ye may think a bit; for your mother's son kens that ye are no so careful as you should be of the gear, and I hae tauld ye of it before, jewel."

I assured her I could easily spare the money, without risk of future repentance; and she went on to infer, that, in such a case, "Mr. Croftangry had grown a rich man in foreign parts,

and was free of his troubles with messengers and sheriff-officers, and siclike scum of the earth, and Shanet MacEvoy's mother's daughter be a blithe woman to hear it. But if Mr. Croftangry was in trouble, there was his room, and his ped, and Shanet to wait on him, and tak payment when it was quite convenient."

I explained to Janet my situation, in which she expressed unqualified delight. I then proceeded to inquire into her own circumstances, and, though she spoke cheerfully and contentedly, I could see they were precarious. I had paid more than was due; other lodgers fell into an opposite error, and forgot to pay Janet at all. Then, Janet being ignorant of all indirect modes of screwing money out of her lodgers, others in the same line of life, who were sharper than the poor simple Highland woman, were enabled to let their apartments cheaper in appearance, though the inmates usually found them twice as dear in the long-run.

As I had already destined my old landlady to be my house-keeper and governante, knowing her honesty, good-nature, and, although a Scotchwoman, her cleanliness and excellent temper (saving the short and hasty expressions of anger which Highlanders call a *fuff*), I now proposed the plan to her in such a way as was likely to make it most acceptable. Very acceptable as the proposal was, as I could plainly see, Janet, however, took a day to consider upon it; and her reflections against our next meeting had suggested only one objection, which was singular enough.

"My honor," so she now termed me, "would pe for biding in some fine street about the town; now Shanet wad ill like to live in a place where polish, and sheriffs, and bailiffs, and sic thieves and trash of the world, could tak puir shentlemen by the throat, just because they wanted a wheen dollars in the sporran. She had lived in the bonny glen of Tomanthoulick—Cot, an ony of the vermint had come there, her father wad hae wared a shot on them, and he could hit a buck within as many measured yards as e'er a man of his clan. And the place here was sae quiet frae them, they durstna put their nose ower the gutter. Shanet owed nobody a bodle, but she couldna pide to see honest folk and pretty shentlemen forced away to prison whether they would or no; and then if Shanet was to lay her tangs ower ane of the ragamuffins' heads, it would be, maybe, that the law would gie't a hard name."

One thing I have learned in life,—never to speak sense when nonsense will answer the purpose as well. I should have had great difficulty to convince this practical and disinterested admirer and vindicator of liberty, that arrests seldom or never

were to be seen in the streets of Edinburgh, and to satisfy her of their justice and necessity, would have been as difficult as to convert her to the Protestant faith. I therefore assured her my intention, if I could get a suitable habitation, was to remain in the quarter where she at present dwelt. Janet gave three skips on the floor, and uttered as many short shrill yells of joy; yet doubt almost instantly returned, and she insisted on knowing what possible reason I could have for making my residence where few lived, save those whose misfortunes drove them thither. It occurred to me to answer her by recounting the legend of the rise of my family, and of our deriving our name from a particular place near Holyrood Palace. This, which would have appeared to most people a very absurd reason for choosing a residence, was entirely satisfactory to Janet Mac-Evoy.

"Och, nae doubt! if it was the land of her fathers, there was nae mair to be said. Put it was queer that her family estate should just lie at the town tail, and covered with houses, where the King's cows, Cot bless them hide and horn, used to craze upon. It was strange changes."—She mused a little, and then added, "Put it is something better wi' Croftangry when the changes is frae the field to the habitated place, and not from the place of habitation to the desert; for Shanet, her nainsell, kent a glen where there were men as weel as there may be in Croftangry, and if there werena altogether sae many of them, they were as cood men in their tartan as the others in their broadcloth. And there were houses too; and if they were not biggit with stane and lime, and lofted like the houses at Croftangry, yet they served the purpose of them that lived there; and mony a braw bonnet, and mony a silken snood, and comely white curch, would come out to gang to kirk or chapel on the Lord's day, and little bairns toddling after; and now,—Och, Och, Ohellany, Ohonari! the glen is desolate, and the braw snoods and bonnets are gane, and the Saxon's house stands dull and lonely, like the single bare-breasted rock that the falcon builds on—the falcon that drives the heathbird frae the glen."

Janet, like many Highlanders was full of imagination; and, when melancholy themes came upon her, expressed herself almost poetically, owing to the genius of the Celtic language in which she thought, and in which doubtless, she would have spoken, had I understood Gaelic. In two minutes the shade of gloom and regret had passed from her good-humored features, and she was again the little busy prating, important old woman, undisputed owner of one flat of a small tenement in the Abbey

yard, and about to be promoted to be housekeeper to an elderly bachelor gentleman, Chrystal Croftangry, Esq.

It was not long before Janet's local researches found out exactly the sort of place I wanted, and there we settled. Janet was afraid I would not be satisfied, because it is not exactly part of Croftangry; but I stopped her doubts, by assuring her it had been part and pendicle thereof in my forefathers' time, which passed very well.

I do not intend to possess any one with an exact knowledge of my lodging; though, as Bobadil says, "I care not who knows it, since the cabin is convenient." But I may state in general, that it is a house "within itself," or according to a newer phraseology in advertisements, *self-contained*, has a garden of near half-an-acre, and a patch of ground with trees in front. It boasts five rooms, and servants' apartments—looks in front upon the palace, and from behind toward the hill and crags of the King's Park. Fortunately the place had a name, which, with a little improvement, served to countenance the legend which I had imposed on Janet, and would not perhaps have been sorry if I had been able to imposed on myself. It was called Little-croft; we have dubbed it Little Croftangry, and the men of letters belonging to the Post Office have sanctioned the change, and deliver letters so addressed. Thus I am, to all intents and purposes, Chrystal Croftangry of that Ilk.

My establishment consists of Janet, an under maid-servant, and a Highland wench for Janet to exercise her Gaelic upon, with a handy lad who can lay the cloth, and take care besides of a pony, on which I find my way to Portobello sands, especially when the cavalry have a drill; for, like an old fool as I am, I have not altogether become indifferent to the tramp of horses and the flash of weapons, of which, though no professional soldier, it has been my fate to see something in my youth. For wet mornings, I have my book—is it fine weather, I visit, or I wander on the Crag, as the humor dictates. My dinner is indeed solitary, yet not quite so neither; for though Andrews waits, Janet,—or, as she is to all the world but her master, and certain old Highland gossips,—Mrs. MacEvoy, attends, bustles about, and desires to see everything is in first-rate order, and to tell me, Cot pless us, the wonderful news of the Palace for the day. When the cloth is removed, and I light my cigar, and being to husband a pint of port or a glass of old whisky and water, it is the rule of the house that Janet takes a chair at some distance, and nods or works her stocking, as she may be disposed; ready to speak if I am in the talking humor, and sitting quiet as a mouse if I am rather inclined to study a

book or the newspaper. At six precisely she makes my tea, and leaves me to drink it ; and then occurs an interval of time which most old bachelors find heavy on their hands. The theatre is a good occasional resource, especially if Will Murray * acts, or a bright star of eminence shines forth ; but it is distant, and so are one or two public societies to which I belong ; besides, these evening walks are all incompatible with the elbow-chair feeling, which desires some employment that may divert the mind without fatiguing the body.

Under the influence of these impressions, I have sometimes thought of this literary undertaking. I must have been the Bonassus himself to have mistaken myself for a genius, yet I have leisure and reflection like my neighbors. I am a borderer also between two generations, and can point out more perhaps than others of those fading traces of antiquity which are daily vanishing ; and I know many a modern instance and many an old tradition, and therefore I ask—

What ails me, I may not, as well as they,
 Rake up some threadbare tales, that mouldering lay
 In chimney corners, wont by Christmas fires
 To read and rock to sleep our ancient sires ?
 No man his threshold better knows than I
 Brute's first arrival and first victory.
 Saint George's sorrel and his cross of blood.
 Arthur's round board and Caledonian wood.

No shop is so easily set up as an antiquary's. Like those of the lowest order of pawnbrokers, a commodity of rusty iron, a bag or two of hobnails, a few old shoebuckles, cashiered kailpots, and fire-irons declared incapable of service, are quite sufficient to set him up. If he add a sheaf or two of penny ballads and broadsides, he is a great man—an extensive trader. And then—like the pawnbrokers aforesaid, if the author understands a little legerdemain, he may, by dint of a little picking and stealing, make the inside of his shop a great deal richer than the out, and be able to show you things which cause those who do not understand the antiquarian trick of clean conveyance, to wonder how the devil he came by them.

It may be said that antiquarian articles interest but few customers, and that we may bawl ourselves as rusty as the wares we deal in without any one asking the price of our merchandise. But I do not rest my hopes upon this department of my labors only. I propose also to have a corresponding shop for Sentiment, and Dialogues, and Disquisition, which

* [Late manager of the Edinburgh theatre. See Appendix.]

may captivate the fancy of those who have no relish, as the established phrase goes, for pure antiquity ;—a sort of green-grocer's stall erected in front of my ironmongery wares, garlanding the rusty memorials of ancient times, with cresses, cabbages, leeks, and water purpy.

As I have some idea that I am writing too well to be understood, I humble myself to ordinary language, and aver, with becoming modesty, that I do think myself capable of sustaining a publication of a miscellaneous nature, as like to the *Spectator* or the *Guardian*, the *Mirror* or the *Lounger*, as my poor abilities may be able to accomplish. Not that I have any purpose of imitating Johnson, whose general power of learning and expression I do not deny, but many of whose *Ramblers* are little better than a sort of pageant, where trite and obvious maxims are made to swagger in lofty and mystic language, and get some credit only because they are not easily understood. There are some of the great *Moralist's* papers which I cannot peruse without thinking on a second-rate masquerade, where the best-known and least-esteemed characters in town march in as heroes, and sultans, and so forth, and, by dint of tawdry dresses, get some consideration until they are found out. It is not, however, prudent to commence with throwing stones, just when I am striking out windows of my own.

I think even the local situation of Little Croftangry may be considered as favorable to my undertaking. A nobler contrast there can hardly exist than that of the huge city, dark with the smoke of ages, and groaning with the various sounds of active industry or idle revel, and the lofty and craggy hill, silent and solitary as the grave ; one exhibiting the full tide of existence, pressing and precipitating itself forward with the force of an inundation ; the other resembling some time-worn anchorite, whose life passes as silent and unobserved as the slender rill which escapes unheard, and scarce seen, from the fountain of his patron saint. The city resembles the busy temple where the modern *Comus* and *Mammon* hold their court, and thousands sacrifice ease, independence, and virtue itself, at their shrine ; the misty and lonely mountain seems as a throne to the majestic but terrible *Genius* of feudal times, when the same divinities dispensed coronets and domains to those who had heads to devise, and arms to execute, bold enterprises.

I have, as it were, the two extremities of the moral world at my threshold. From the front door, a few minutes' walk brings me into the heart of a wealthy and populous city ; as many paces from my opposite entrance, place me in a solitude as com-

plete as Zimmerman could have desired. Surely, with such aids to my imagination, I may write better than if I were in a lodging in the New Town, or a garret in the old. As the Spaniard says, "*Viamos—Caracco!*"

I have not chosen to publish periodically, my reason for which was twofold. In the first place, I don't like to be hurried, and have had enough of duns in an early part of my life, to make me reluctant to hear of, or see one, even in the less awful shape of a printer's devil. But, secondly, a periodical paper is not easily extended in circulation beyond the quarter in which it is published. This work, if published in fugitive numbers, would scarce, without a high pressure on the part of the bookseller, be raised above the Netherbow, and never could be expected to ascend to the level of Princes Street. Now, I am ambitious that my compositions, though having their origin in this Valley of Holyrood, should not only be extended into those exalted regions I have mentioned, but also that they should cross the Forth, astonish the long town of Kirkcaldy, enchant the skippers and colliers of the East of Fife, venture even into the classic arcades of St. Andrews, and travel as much further to the north as the breath of applause will carry their sails. As for a southward direction, it is not to be hoped for in my fondest dreams. I am informed that Scottish literature, like Scottish whisky, will be presently laid under a prohibitory duty. But enough of this. If any reader is dull enough not to comprehend the advantages which, in point of circulation, a compact book has over a collection of fugitive numbers, let him try the range of a gun loaded with hail-shot, against that of the same piece charged with an equal weight of lead consolidated in a single bullet.

Besides, it was of less consequence that I should have published periodically, since I did not mean to solicit or accept of the contributions of friends, or the criticisms of those who may be less kindly disposed. Notwithstanding the excellent examples which might be quoted, I will establish no begging-box, either under the name of a lion's head or an ass's. What is good or ill shall be mine own, or the contribution of friends to whom I may have private access. Many of my voluntary assistants might be cleverer than myself, and then I should have a brilliant article appear among my chiller effusions, like a patch of lace on a Scottish cloak of Galashiels gray. Some might be worse, and then I must reject them, to the injury of the feelings of the writer, or else insert them, to make my own darkness yet more opaque and palpable. "Let every herring," says our old-fashion-proverb, "hang by his own head."

One person, however, I may distinguish, as she is now no

more, who, living to the utmost term of human life, honored me with a great share of her friendship, as indeed we were blood relatives in the Scottish sense—Heaven knows how many degrees removed—and friends in the sense of Old England. I mean the late excellent and regretted Mrs. Bethune Baliol. But as I design this admirable picture of the olden time for a principal character in my work, I will only say here that she knew and approved of my present purpose; and though she declined to contribute to it while she lived, from a sense of dignified retirement, which she thought became her age, sex, and condition in life, she left me some materials for carrying on my proposed work, which I coveted when I heard her detail them in conversation, and which now, when I have their substance in her own handwriting, I account far more valuable than anything I have myself to offer. I hope the mentioning her name in conjunction with my own, will give no offence to any of her numerous friends, as it was her own express pleasure that I should employ the manuscripts, which she did me the honor to bequeath me, in the manner in which I have now used them. It must be added, however, that in most cases I have disguised names, and in some have added shading and coloring to bring out the narrative.

Much of my materials, besides these, are derived from friends, living or dead. The accuracy of some of these may be doubtful, in which case I shall be happy to receive, from sufficient authority, the correction of the errors which must creep into traditional documents. The object of the whole publication is, to throw some light on the manners of Scotland, as they were, and to contrast them occasionally with those of the present day. My own opinions are in favor of our own times, in many respects, but not in so far as affords means for exercising the imagination, or exciting the interest which attaches to other times. I am glad to be a writer or a reader in 1826, but I would be most interested in reading or relating what happened from half-a-century to a century before. We have the best of it. Scenes in which our ancestors thought deeply, acted fiercely, and died desperately, are to us tales to divert the tedium of a winter's evening, when we are engaged to no party, or beguile a summer's morning, when it is too scorching to ride or walk.

Yet I do not mean that my essays and narratives should be limited to Scotland. I pledge myself to no particular line of subjects but on the contrary, say with Burns,

Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
Perhaps turn out a sermon.

I have only to add, by way of postscript to these preliminary

chapters, that I have had recourse to Molière's recipe, and read my manuscript over to my old woman, Janet MacEvoy.

The dignity of being consulted delighted Janet; and Wilkie, or Allan, would have made a capital sketch of her, as she sat upright in her chair, instead of her ordinary lounging posture, knitting her stocking systematically, as if she meant every twist of her thread, and inclination of the wires, to bear burden to the cadence of my voice. I am afraid, too, that I myself felt more delight than I ought to have done in my own composition, and read a little more oratorically than I should have ventured to do before an auditor, of whose applause I was not secure. And the result did not entirely encourage my plan of censorship. Janet did indeed seriously incline to the account of my previous life, and bestowed some Highland maledictions more emphatic than courteous on Christie Steele's reception of a "shentlemans in distress," and of her own mistress's house, too. I omitted, for certain reasons, or greatly abridged, what related to herself. But when I came to treat of my general views in publication, I saw poor Janet was entirely thrown out, though, like a jaded hunter, panting, puffing, and short of wind, she endeavored at least to keep up with the chase. Or rather her perplexity made her look all the while like a deaf person ashamed of his infirmity, who does not understand a word you are saying, yet desires you to believe that he does understand you, and who is extremely jealous that you suspect his incapacity. When she saw that some remark was necessary, she resembled exactly in her criticism the devotee who pitched on the "sweet word Mesopotamia," as the most edifying note which she could bring away from a sermon. She indeed hastened to bestow general praise on what she said was all "very fine;" but chiefly dwelt on what I had said about Mr. Timmerman, as she was pleased to call the German philosopher, and supposed he must be of the same descent with the Highland clan of M'Intyre, which signifies Son of the Carpenter. "And a fery honorable name too—Shanet's own mither was a M'Intyre."

In short, it was plain the latter part of my introduction was altogether lost on poor Janet, and so, to have acted up to Molière's system, I should have canceled the whole, and written it anew. But I do not know how it is; I retained, I suppose, some tolerable opinion of my own composition, though Janet did not comprehend it, and felt loath to retrench those delilahs of the imagination, as Dryden calls them, the tropes and figures of which are caviar to the multitude. Besides, I hate re-writing, as much as Falstaff did paying back—it is a double labor. So

I determined with myself to consult Janet, in future, only on such things as were within the limits of her comprehension, and hazard my arguments and my rhetoric on the public without her imprimatur. I am pretty sure she will "applaud it done." And in such narratives as come within her range of thought and feeling, I shall, as I first intended, take the benefit of her unsophisticated judgment, and attend to it deferentially—that is, when it happens not to be in peculiar opposition to my own; for, after all, I say, with Almanzor—

Know that I alone am king of me.

The reader has now my who and my whereabouts, the purpose of the work, and the circumstances under which it is undertaken. He has also a specimen of the author's talents, and may judge for himself, and proceed or send back the volume to the bookseller, as his own taste shall determine.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

MR. CROFTANGRY'S ACCOUNT OF MRS. BETHUNE BALIOL.

The moon, were she earthly, no nobler.

CORIOLANUS.

WHEN we set out on the jolly voyage of life, what a brave fleet there is around us, as stretching our fresh canvas to the breeze, all "shipshape and Bristol fashion," pennons flying, music playing, cheering each other as we pass, we are rather amused than alarmed when some awkward comrade goes right ashore for want of pilotage!—Alas! when the voyage is well spent, and we look about us, toil-worn mariners, how few of our ancient consorts still remain in sight, and they, how torn and wasted, and, like ourselves struggling to keep as long as possible off the fatal shore, against which we are all finally drifting!

I felt this very trite but melancholy truth in all its force the other day, when a packet with a black seal arrived, containing a letter addressed to me by my late excellent friend Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol, and marked with the fatal indorsation "To be delivered according to address, after I shall be no more." A letter from her executors accompanied the packet, mentioning that they had found in her will a bequest to me of a painting of some value, which she stated would just fit the space

above my cupboard, and fifty guineas to buy a ring. And thus I separated, with all the kindness which we had maintained for many years, from a friend, who, though old enough to have been the companion of my mother, was yet, in gayety of spirits, and admirable sweetness of temper, capable of being agreeable, and even animating society, for those who write themselves in the vaward of youth; an advantage which I have lost for these five-and-thirty years. The contents of the packet I had no difficulty in guessing, and have partly hinted at them in the last chapter. But, to instruct the reader in the particulars, and at the same time to indulge myself with recalling the virtues and agreeable qualities of my late friend, I will give a short sketch of her manners and habits.

Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol was a person of quality and fortune, as these are esteemed in Scotland. Her family was ancient, and her connections honorable. She was not fond of specially indicating her exact age, but her juvenile recollections stretched backward till before the eventful year 1745; and she remembered the Highland clans being in possession of the Scottish capital, though probably only as an indistinct vision. Her fortune, independent by her father's bequest was rendered opulent by the death of more than one brave brother, who fell successively in the service of their country; so that the family estates became vested in the only surviving child of the ancient house of Bethune Baliol. My intimacy was formed with the excellent lady after this event, and when she was already something advanced in age.

She inhabited, when in Edinburgh, where she regularly spent the winter season, one of those old hotels, which, till of late, were to be found in the neighborhood of the Canongate, and of the Palace of Holyrood House, and which, separated from the street, now dirty and vulgar, by paved courts, and gardens of some extent, made amends for an indifferent access by showing something of aristocratic state and seclusion, when you were once admitted within their precincts. They have pulled her house down; for, indeed, betwixt building and burning, every ancient monument of the Scottish capital is now likely to be utterly demolished. I pause on the recollections of the place, however; and since nature has denied a pencil when she placed a pen in my hand, I will endeavor to make words answer the purpose of delineation.

Baliol's Lodging, so was the mansion named, reared its high stack of chimneys, among which were seen a turret or two, and one of those small projecting platforms, called bartizans, above the mean and modern buildings which line the south side of

the Canongate, toward the lower end of that street, and not distant from the Palace. A *porte cochère*, having a wicket for foot-passengers, was upon due occasion, unfolded by a lame old man, tall, grave, and thin, who tenanted a hovel beside the gate, and acted as porter. To this office he had been promoted by my friend's charitable feelings for an old soldier, and partly by an idea, that his head, which was a very fine one, bore some resemblance to that of Garrick in the character of Lusignan. He was a man saturnine, silent, and slow in his proceedings, and would never open the *porte cochère* to a hackney coach; indicating the wicket with his finger, as the proper passage for all who came in that obscure vehicle, which was not permitted to degrade with its ticketed presence the dignity of Baliol's Lodging. I do not think this peculiarity would have met with his lady's approbation, any more than the occasional partiality of Lusignan, or, as mortals called him, Archy Macready, to a dram. But Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol, conscious that, in case of conviction, she could never have prevailed upon herself to dethrone the King of Palestine from the stone bench on which he sat for hours knitting his stocking, refused, by accrediting the intelligence, even to put him upon his trial; well judging that he would observe more wholesome caution if he conceived his character unsuspected, than if he were detected, and suffered to pass unpunished. For after all she said, it would be cruel to dismiss an old Highland soldier for a peccadillo so appropriate to his country and profession.

The stately gate for carriages, or the humble accommodation for foot-passengers, admitted into a narrow and short passage, running between two rows of lime-trees, whose green foliage during the spring, contrasted strangely with the swart complexion of the two walls by the side of which they grew. This access led to the front of the house, which was formed by two gable ends, notched, and having their windows adorned with heavy architectural ornaments; they joined each other at right angles; and a half circular tower, which contained the entrance and the staircase, occupied the point of junction, and rounded the acute angle. One of other two sides of the little court, in which there was just sufficient room to turn a carriage, was occupied by some low buildings answering the purpose of offices; the other, by a parapet surrounded by a highly-ornamented iron railing, twined round with honeysuckle and other parasitical shrubs, which permitted the eye to peep into a pretty suburban garden, extending down to the road called the South Back of the Canongate, and boasting a number of old trees, many flowers, and even some fruit. We must not forget to

state, that the extreme cleanliness of the courtyard was such as intimated that mop and pail had done their utmost in that favored spot, to atone for the general dirt and dinginess of the quarter where the premises were situated.

Over the doorway were the arms of Bethune and Baliol, with various other devices carved in stone ; the door itself was studded with iron nails, and formed of black oak ; an iron rasp,* as it was called, was placed on it, instead of a knocker, for the purpose of summoning the attendants. He who usually appeared at the summons was a smart lad, in a handsome livery, the son of Mrs. Martha's gardener at Mount Baliol. Now and then a servant girl, nicely but plainly dressed, and fully accoutred with stockings and shoes, would perform this duty ; and twice or thrice I remember being admitted by Beauffet himself, whose exterior looked as much like that of a clergyman of rank as the butler of a gentleman's family. He had been valet-de-chambre to the last Sir Richard Bethune Baliol, and was a person highly trusted by the present lady. A full stand, as it is called in Scotland, of garments of a dark color, gold buckles in his shoes, and at the knees of his breeches, with his hair regularly dressed and powdered, announced him to be a domestic of trust and importance. His mistress used to say of him,

He's sad and civil,
And suits well for a servant with my fortunes.

As no one can escape scandal, some said that Beauffet made a rather better thing of the place than the modesty of his old-fashioned wages would, unassisted, have amounted to. But the man was always very civil to me. He had been long in the family ; had enjoyed legacies, and laid by a something of his own, upon which he now enjoys ease with dignity, in as far as his newly-married wife, Tibbie Shortacres, will permit him.

The Lodging—Dearest reader, if you are tired, pray pass over the next four or five pages—was not by any means so large as its external appearance led people to conjecture. The interior accommodation was much cut up by cross walls and long passages, and that neglect of economizing space which characterizes old Scottish architecture. But there was far more room than my old friend required, even when she had, as was often the case, four or five young cousins under her protection ; and I believe much of the house was unoccupied. Mrs. Bethune Baliol never, in my presence, showed herself so much offended,

* Note C. Iron rasp.

as once with a meddling person who advised her to have the windows of these supernumerary apartments built up, to save the tax. She said in ire, that, while she lived, the light of God should visit the house of her fathers; and while she had a penny, king and country should have their due. Indeed, she was punctiliously loyal, even in that most staggering test of loyalty, the payment of imports. Mr. Beauffet told me he was ordered to offer a glass of wine to the person who collected the income-tax, and that the poor man was so overcome by a reception so unwontedly generous, that he had well-nigh fainted on the spot.

You entered by a matted anteroom into the eating parlor, filled with old-fashioned furniture, and hung with family portraits, which, excepting one of Sir Bernard Bethune, in James the Sixth's time, said to be by Jameson, were exceedingly frightful. A saloon, as it was called, a long narrow chamber, led out of the dining parlor, and served for a drawing-room. It was a pleasant apartment, looking out upon the south flank of Holyrood House, the gigantic slope of Arthur Seat, and the girdle of lofty rocks called Salisbury Crags;* objects so rudely wild that the mind can hardly conceive them to exist in the vicinage of a populous metropolis. The paintings of the saloon came from abroad, and had some of them much merit. To see the best of them, however, you must be admitted into the very penetralia of the temple, and allowed to draw the tapestry at the upper end of the saloon, and enter Mrs. Martha's own special dressing-room. This was a charming apartment, of which it would be difficult to describe the form, it had so many recesses, which were filled up with shelves of ebony, and cabinets of japan and *or molu*; some for holding books, of which Mrs. Martha had an admirable collection, some for a display of ornamental china, others for shells and similar curiosities. In a little niche, half screened by a curtain of crimson silk, was disposed a suit of tilting armor of bright steel, inlaid with silver, which had been worn on some memorable occasion by Sir Bernard Bethune, already mentioned; while over the canopy of the niche hung the broadsword with which her father had attempted to change the fortunes of Britain in 1715, and the spontoon which her elder brother bore when he was leading on a company of the Black Watch † at Fontenoy.

* The Rev. Mr. Bowles derives the name of these crags, as of the Episcopal city in the west of England, from the same root; both, in his opinion, which he very ably defends and illustrates, having been the sites of druidical temples.

† The well-known original designation of the gallant 42d Regiment.

There were some Italian and Flemish pictures of admitted authenticity, a few genuine bronzes and other objects of curiosity, which her brothers or herself had picked up while abroad. In short, it was a place where the idle were tempted to become studious, the studious to grow idle—where the grave might find matter to make them gay, and the gay subjects for gravity.

That it might maintain some title to its name, I must not forget to say, that the lady's dressing-room exhibited a superb mirror, framed in silver filigree work; a beautiful toilet, the cover of which was of Flanders lace; and a set of boxes corresponding in materials and work to the frame of the mirror.

This dressing apparatus, however, was mere matter of parade: Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol always went through the actual duties of the toilet in an inner apartment, which corresponded with her sleeping room by a small detached staircase. There were, I believe, more than one of those *turnpike stairs*, as they were called, about the house, by which the public rooms, all of which entered from each other, were accommodated with separate and independent modes of access. In the little boudoir we have described, Mrs. Martha Baliol had her choicest meetings. She kept early hours; and if you went in the morning, you must not reckon that space of day as extending beyond three o'clock, or four at the utmost. These vigilant habits were attended with some restraint on her visitors, but they were indemnified by your always finding the best society, and the best information, which was to be had for the day in the Scottish capital. Without at all affecting the blue stocking, she liked books—they amused her—and if the authors were persons of character, she thought she owed them a debt of civility, which she loved to discharge by personal kindness. When she gave a dinner to a small party, which she did now and then, she had the good nature to look for, and the good luck to discover, what sort of people suited each other best, and chose her company as Duke Theseus did his hounds,

—matched in mouth like bells,
Each under each,*

so that every guest could take his part in the cry; instead of one mighty Tom of a fellow, like Dr. Johnson, silencing all

Being the first corps raised for the royal service in the Highlands, and allowed to retain their national garb, they were thus named from the contrast which their dark tartans furnished to the scarlet and white of the other regiments.

* Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Act IV. Sc. 1,

besides, by the tremendous depth of his diapason. On such occasions she afforded *chère exquise*; and every now and then there was some dish of French, or even Scottish derivation, which, as well as the numerous assortment of *vins extraordinaires* produced by Mr. Beauffet, gave a sort of antique and foreign air to the entertainment, which rendered it more interesting.

It was a great thing to be asked to such parties; and not less so to be invited to the early *conversazione*, which, in spite of fashion, by dint of the best coffee, the finest tea, and *chasse café* that would have called the dead to life, she contrived now and then to assemble in her saloon already mentioned at the unnatural hour of eight in the evening. At such times, the cheerful old lady seemed to enjoy herself so much in the happiness of her guests, that they exerted themselves, in turn, to prolong her amusement and their own; and a certain charm was excited around, seldom to be met with in parties of pleasure, and which was founded on the general desire of every one present to contribute something to the common amusement.

But, although it was a great privilege to be admitted to wait on my excellent friend in the morning, or be invited to her dinner or evening parties, I prized still higher the right which I had acquired, by old acquaintance, of visiting Baliol's Lodging, upon the chance of finding its venerable inhabitant preparing for tea, just about six o'clock in the evening. It was only to two or three old friends that she permitted this freedom, nor was this sort of chance party ever allowed to extend itself beyond five in number. The answer to those who came later, announced that the company was filled up for the evening; which had the double effect, of making those who waited on Mrs. Bethune Baliol in this uncereemonious manner punctual in observing her hour, and of adding the zest of a little difficulty to the enjoyment of the party.

It more frequently happened that only one or two persons partook of this refreshment on the same evening; or, supposing the case of a single gentleman, Mrs. Martha, though she did not hesitate to admit him to her boudoir, after the privilege of the French and the old Scottish school, took care, as she used to say, to preserve all possible propriety, by commanding the attendance of her principal female attendant, Mrs. Alice Lambskin, who might, from the gravity and dignity of her appearance, have sufficed to matronize a whole boarding school, instead of one maiden lady of eighty and upward. As the weather permitted, Mrs. Alice sat duly remote from the company in a *fauteuil* behind the projecting chimney-piece, or in

the embrasure of a window, and prosecuted in Carthusian silence, with indefatigable zeal, a piece of embroidery, which seemed no bad emblem of eternity.

But I have neglected all this while to introduce my friend herself to the reader, at least so far as words can convey the peculiarities by which her appearance and conversation were distinguished.

A little woman, with ordinary features, and an ordinary form, and hair, which in youth had no decided color, we may believe Mrs. Martha, when she said of herself that she was never remarkable for personal charms; a modest admission, which was readily confirmed by certain old ladies, her contemporaries, who, whatever might have been the useful advantages which they more than hinted had been formerly their own share, were now in personal appearance, as well as in everything else, far inferior to my accomplished friend. Mrs. Martha's features had been of a kind which might be said to wear well; their irregularity was now of little consequence, animated as they were by the vivacity of her conversation; her teeth were excellent, and her eyes, although inclining to gray, were lively, laughing, and undimmed by time. A slight shade of complexion, more brilliant than her years promised, subjected my friend, amongst strangers, to the suspicion of having stretched her foreign habits as far as the prudent touch of the rouge. But it was a calumny; for when telling or listening to an interesting and affecting story, I have seen her color come and go as if it played on the cheek of eighteen.

Her hair, whatever its former deficiencies, was now the most beautiful white that time could bleach, and was disposed with some degree of pretension, though in the simplest manner possible, so as to appear neatly smoothed under a cap of Flanders lace, of an old-fashioned, but, as I thought, of a very handsome form, which undoubtedly has a name, and I would endeavor to recur to it, if I thought it would make my description a bit more intelligible. I think I have heard her say these favorite caps had been her mother's, and had come in fashion with a peculiar kind of wig used by the gentleman about the time of the battle of Ramillies. The rest of her dress was always rather costly and distinguished, especially in the evening. A silk or satin gown, of some color becoming her age, and of a form which, though complying to a certain degree with the present fashion, had always a reference to some more distant period, was garnished with triple ruffles; her shoes had diamond buckles, and were raised a little at heel, an advantage which, possessed in her youth, she alleged her size would not permit her to forego

in her old age. She always wore rings, bracelets, and other ornaments of value, either for the materials or the workmanship; nay, perhaps she was a little profuse in this species of display. But she wore them as subordinate matters, to which the habit of being constantly in high life rendered her indifferent. She wore them because her rank required it; and thought no more of them as articles of finery, than a gentleman dressed for dinner thinks of his clean linen and well-brushed coat, the consciousness of which embarrasses the rustic beau on a Sunday.

Now and then, however, if a gem or ornament chanced to be noticed for its beauty or singularity, the observation usually led the way to an entertaining account of the manner in which it had been acquired, or the person from whom it had descended to its present possessor. On such and similar occasions my old friend spoke willingly, which is not uncommon; but she also, which is more rare, spoke remarkably well, and had in her little narratives concerning foreign parts, or former days, which formed an interesting part of her conversation, the singular art of dismissing all the usual protracted tautology respecting time, place, and circumstances, which is apt to settle like a mist upon the cold and languid tales of age, and at the same time of bringing forward, dwelling upon, and illustrating, those incidents and characters which give point and interest to the story.

She had, as we have hinted, traveled a good deal in foreign countries: for a brother, to whom she was much attached, had been sent upon various missions of national importance to the Continent, and she had more than once embraced the opportunity of accompanying him. This furnished a great addition to the information which she could supply, especially during the last war, when the Continent was for so many years hermetically sealed against the English nation. But, besides, Mrs. Bethune Baliol visited distant countries, not in the modern fashion, when English people travel in caravans together, and see in France and Italy little besides the same society which they might have enjoyed at home. On the contrary, she mingled, when abroad, with the natives of those countries she visited, and enjoyed at once the advantage of their society, and the pleasure of comparing it with that of Britain.

In the course of her becoming habituated with foreign manners, Mrs. Bethune Baliol had, perhaps, acquired some slight tincture of them herself. Yet I was always persuaded, that the peculiar vivacity of look and manner—the pointed and appropriate action—with which she accompanied what she said—the

use of the gold and gemmed *tabatière*, or rather I should say *bonbonnière* (for she took no snuff, and the little box contained only a few pieces of candied angelica, or some such lady-like sweetmeat), were of real old-fashioned Scottish growth, and such as might have graced the tea-table of Susannah, Countess of Eglington,* the patroness of Allan Ramsay, or of the Hon. Mrs. Colonel Ogilvy, who was another mirror by whom the maidens of Auld Reekie were required to dress themselves. Although well acquainted with the customs of other countries, her manners had been chiefly formed in her own, at a time when great folk lived within little space, and when the distinguished name of the highest society gave to Edinburgh the *éclat*, which we now endeavor to derive from the unbounded expense and extended circle of our pleasures.

I was more confirmed in this opinion, by the peculiarity of the dialect which Mrs. Baliol used. It was Scottish, decidedly Scottish, often containing phrases and words little used in the present day. But then her tone and mode of pronunciation were as different from the usual accent of the ordinary Scotch *patois*, as the accent of St. James's is from that of Billingsgate. The vowels were not pronounced much broader than in the Italian language, and there was none of the disagreeable drawl which is so offensive to southern ears. In short it seemed to be the Scottish as spoken by the ancient court of Scotland, to which no idea of vulgarity could be attached; and the lively manner and gestures with which it was accompanied, were so completely in accord with the sound of the voice and the style of talking, that I cannot assign them a different origin. In long derivation, perhaps, the manners of the Scottish court might have been originally formed on that of France, to which it had certainly some affinity; but I will live and die in the belief that those of Mrs. Baliol, as pleasing as they were peculiar, came to her by direct descent from the high dames who anciently adorned with their presence the royal halls of Holyrood.

* Susannah Kennedy, daughter of Sir Archibald Kennedy of Colyeen, Bart., by Elizabeth Lesly, daughter of David Lord Newark, third wife of Alexander 9th Earl of Eglinton, and mother of the 10th and 11th Earls. She survived her husband, who died 1729, no less than fifty-seven years, and died March 1780, in her 91st year. Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*, published 1726, is dedicated to her, in verse, by Hamilton of Bangour.

An interesting account of this distinguished lady will be found in Boswell's *Life of Johnson* by Mr. Croker.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

MRS. BALIOL ASSISTS CROFTANGRY IN HIS LITERARY
SPECULATIONS.

SUCH as I have described Mrs. Bethune Baliol, the reader will easily believe that when I thought of the miscellaneous nature of my work, I rested upon the information she possessed, and her communicative disposition, as one of the principal supports of my enterprise. Indeed, she by no means disapproved of my proposed publication, though expressing herself very doubtful how far she could personally assist it—a doubt which might be perhaps set down to a little lady-like coquetry, which required to be sued for the boon she was not unwilling to grant. Or, perhaps, the good old lady, conscious that her unusual term of years must soon draw to a close, preferred bequeathing the materials in the shape of a legacy, to subjecting them to the judgment of a critical public during her lifetime.

Many a time I used, in our conversations of the Canongate, to resume my request of assistance, from a sense that my friend was the most valuable depositary of Scottish traditions that was probably now to be found. This was a subject on which my mind was so much made up, that when I heard her carry her description of manners so far back beyond her own time, and describe how Fletcher of Salton spoke, how Graham of Claverhouse danced, what were the jewels worn by the famous Duchess of Lauderdale, and how she came by them, I could not help telling her I thought her some fairy, who cheated us by retaining the appearance of a mortal of our own day, when, in fact, she had witnessed the revolutions of centuries. She was much diverted when I required her to take some solemn oath that she had not danced at the balls given by Mary of Este, when her unhappy husband * occupied Holyrood in a species of honorable banishment ;—or asked, whether she could not recollect Charles the Second, when he came to Scotland in 1650, and did not possess some slight recollections of the bold usurper who drove him beyond the Forth.

* The Duke of York, afterward James II., frequently resided in Holyrood House, when his religion rendered him an object of suspicion to the English Parliament.

"*Beau cousin,*" she said, laughing, "none of these do I remember personally; but you must know there has been wonderfully little change on my natural temper from youth to age. From which it follows, cousin, that being even now something too young in spirit for the years which Time has marked me in his calendar, I was, when a girl, a little too old for those of my own standing, and as much inclined at that period to keep the society of elder persons, as I am now disposed to admit the company of gay young fellows of fifty or sixty like yourself, rather than collect about me all the octogenarians. Now, although I do not actually come from Elfland, and therefore cannot boast any personal knowledge of the great personages you inquire about, yet I have seen and heard those who knew them well, and who have given me as distinct an account of them as I could give you myself of the Empress Queen, or Frederic of Prussia; and I will frankly add," said she, laughing and offering her *bouhonnière*, "that *I have* heard so much of the years which immediately succeeded the Revolution, that I sometimes am apt to confuse the vivid descriptions fixed on my memory by the frequent and animated recitation of others, for things which I myself have actually witnessed. I caught myself but yesterday describing to Lord M—— the riding of the last Scottish Parliament, with as much minuteness as if I had seen it, as my mother did, from the balcony in front of Lord Moray's Lodging in the Canongate."

"I am sure you must have given Lord M—— a high treat."

"I treated him with a hearty laugh, I believe," she replied; "but it is you, you vile seducer of youth, who lead me into such follies. But I will be on my guard against my own weakness. I do not well know if the wandering Jew is supposed to have a wife, but I should be sorry a decent middle-aged Scottish gentlewoman should be suspected of identity with such a supernatural person."

"For all that, I must torture you a little more, *ma belle cousine*, with my interrogatories; for how shall I ever turn author unless on the strength of the information which you have so often procured me on the ancient state of manners?"

"Stay, I cannot allow you to give your points of inquiry a name so very venerable, if I am expected to answer them. Ancient is a term for antediluvians. You may catechize me about the battle of Flodden, or ask particulars about Bruce and Wallace, under pretext of curiosity after ancient manners; and that last subject would wake my Baliol blood, you know."

Well, but, Mrs. Baliol, suppose we settle our era:—you do

not call the accession of James the Sixth to the kingdom of Britain very ancient?"

"Umph! no cousin—I think I could tell you more of that than folk now-a-days remember,—for instance, that as James was trooping toward England, bag and baggage, his journey was stopped near Cockenzie by meeting the funeral of the Earl of Winton, the old and faithful servant and follower of his ill-fated mother, poor Mary. It was an ill omen for the *infare* and so was seen of it, cousin." *

I did not choose to prosecute this subject, well knowing Mrs. Bethune Baliol did not like to be much pressed on the subject of the Stuarts, whose misfortunes she pitied, the rather that her father had espoused their cause. And yet her attachment to the present dynasty being very sincere, and even ardent, more especially as her family had served his late Majesty both in peace and war, she experienced a little embarrassment in reconciling her opinions respecting the exiled family, with those she entertained for the present. In fact, like many an old Jacobite, she was contented to be somewhat inconsistent on the subject, comforting herself, that *now* everything stood as it ought to do, and that there was no use in looking back narrowly on the right or wrong of the matter half-a-century ago.

"The Highlands," I suggested, "should furnish you with ample subjects of recollection. You have witnessed the complete change of that primeval country, and have seen a race not far removed from the earliest period of society, melted down into the great mass of civilization; and that could not happen without incidents striking in themselves, and curious as chapters in the history of the human race."

"It is very true," said Mrs. Baliol; "one would think it should have struck the observers greatly, and yet it scarcely did so. For me, I was no Highlander myself, and the Highland chiefs of old, of whom I certainly knew several, had little in their manners to distinguish them from the Lowland gentry, when they mixed in society in Edinburgh, and assumed the Lowland dress. Their peculiar character was for the clansmen at home; and you must not imagine that they swaggered about in plaids and broadswords at the Cross, or came to the Assembly Rooms in bonnets and kilts."

"I remember," said I, "that Swift, in his journal, tells Stella he had dined in the house of a Scots nobleman, with two

* Note D. Earl of Winton.

Highland chiefs, whom he had found as well-bred men as he had ever met with.”*

“Very likely,” said my friend. “The extremes of society approach much more closely to each other than perhaps the Dean of Saint Patrick’s expected. The savage is always to a certain degree polite. Besides, going always armed, and having a very punctilious idea of their own gentility and consequence, they usually behaved to each other and to the Lowlanders, with a good deal of formal politeness, which sometimes even procured them the character of insincerity.”

“Falsehood belongs to an early period of society, as well as the differential forms which we style politeness,” I replied. “A child does not see the least moral beauty in truth, until he has been flogged half-a-dozen times. It is so easy, and apparently so natural, to deny what you cannot be easily convicted of, that a savage as well as a child lies to excuse himself, almost as instinctively as he raises his hand to protect his head. The old saying, ‘confess and be hanged,’ carries much argument in it. I observed a remark the other day in old Birrell. He mentions that M’Gregor of Glenstrae and some of his people had surrendered themselves to one of the Earls of Argyle, upon the express condition that they should be conveyed safe into England. The MacAllum More of the day kept the word of promise, but it was only to the ear. He indeed sent his captives to Berwick, where they had an airing on the other side of the Tweed, but it was under the custody of a strong guard, by whom they were brought back to Edinburgh, and delivered to the executioner. This, Birrell calls keeping a Highlandman’s promise.”†

“Well,” replied Mrs. Baliol, “I might add, that many of the Highland chiefs whom I know in former days had been brought up in France, which might improve their politeness, though perhaps it did not amend their sincerity. But considering, that, belonging to the depressed and defeated faction in the state, they were compelled sometimes to use dissimulation, you must set their uniform fidelity to their friends against their occasional falsehood to their enemies, and then you will not judge poor John Highlandman too severely. They were in a state of society where bright lights are strongly contrasted with deep shadows.”

“It is to that point I would bring you, *ma belle cousine*,—

* EXTRACT OF JOURNAL TO STELLA.—“I dined to-day (12th March 1712) with Lord Treasurer and two gentlemen of the Highlands of Scotland, yet very polite men.”—SWIFT’S *Works*, vol. iii. p. 7. Edin. 1824.

† Note E. M’Gregor of Glenstrae.

and therefore they are most proper subjects for composition."

"And you want to turn composer, my good friend, and set my old tales to some popular tune? But there have been too many composers, if that be the word, in the field before. The Highlands *were* indeed a rich mine; but they have, I think, been fairly wrought out, as a good tune is grinded into vulgarity when it descends to the hurdy-gurdy and the barrel-organ."

"If it be really tune," I replied, "it will recover its better qualities when it gets into the hands of better artists."

"Umph!" said Mrs. Baliol, tapping her box, "we are happy in our own good opinion this evening, Mr. Croftangry. And so you think you can restore the gloss to the tartan, which it has lost by being dragged through so many fingers?"

"With your assistance to procure materials, my dear lady, much, I think, may be done."

"Well—I must do my best, I suppose; though all I know about the Gael is but of little consequence—indeed, I gathered it chiefly from Donald MacLeish."

"And who might Donald MacLeish be?"

"Neither bard nor sennachie, I assure you; nor monk, nor hermit, the approved authorities for old traditions. Donald was as good a postilion as ever drove a chaise and pair between Glencroe and Inverary. I assure you, when I give you my Highland anecdotes, you will hear much of Donald MacLeish. He was Alice Lambskin's beau and mine through a long Highland tour."

"But when am I to possess these anecdotes?—You answer me as Harley did poor Prior—

Let that be done which Mat doth say.
'Yea,' quoth the Earl, 'but not to-day.'"

"Well, *mon beau cousin*, if you begin to remind me of my cruelty, I must remind you it has struck nine on the Abbey clock, and it is time you were going home to Little Croft. angry.—For my promise to assist your antiquarian researches, be assured, I will one day keep it to the utmost extent. It shall not be a Highlandman's promise, as your old citizen calls it."

I, by this time, suspected the purpose of my friend's procrastination; and it saddened my heart to reflect that I was not to get the information which I desired, excepting in the shape of a legacy. I found, accordingly, in the packet transmitted to

me after the excellent lady's death, several anecdotes respecting the Highlands, from which I have selected that which follows, chiefly on account of its possessing great power over the feelings of my critical housekeeper, Janet MacEvoy, who wept most bitterly when I read it to her.

It is, however, but a very simple tale, and may have no interest for persons beyond Janet's rank of life or understanding.

THE HIGHLAND WIDOW.

CHAPTER FIRST.

It wound as near as near could be,
But what it is she cannot tell ;
On the other side it seem'd to be,
Of the huge broad-breasted old oak-tree.

COLERIDGE.

MRS. BETHUNE BALIOL's Memorandum begins thus :—

It is five-and-thirty, or perhaps nearer forty years ago, since, to relieve the dejection of spirits occasioned by a great family loss sustained two or three months before, I undertook what was called the short Highland tour. This had become in some degree fashionable ; but though the military roads were excellent, yet the accommodation was so indifferent, that it was reckoned a little adventure to accomplish it. Besides, the Highlands, though now as peaceable as any part of King George's dominions, was a sound which still carried terror, while so many survived who had witnessed the insurrection of 1745 ; and a vague idea of fear was impressed on many, as they looked from the towers of Stirling northward to the huge chain of mountains, which rises like a dusky rampart to conceal in its recesses a people, whose dress, manners, and language, differed still very much from those of their Lowland countrymen. For my part, I come of a race not greatly subject to apprehensions arising from imagination only. I had some Highland relatives, knew several of their families of distinction ; and, though only having the company of my bower-maiden, Mrs. Alice Lambskin, I went on my journey fearless.

But then I had a guide and cicerone, almost equal to Great-heart in the Pilgrim's Progress, in no less a person than Donald MacLeish, the postilion whom I hired at Stirling, with a pair

of able-bodied horses, as steady as Donald himself, to drag my carriage, my duenna, and myself, wheresoever it was my pleasure to go.

Donald MacLeish was one of a race of post-boys, whom, I suppose, mail-coaches and steamboats have put out of fashion. They were to be found chiefly at Perth, Stirling, or Glasgow, where they and their horses were usually hired by travelers, or tourists, to accomplish such journeys of business or pleasure as they might have to perform in the land of the Gael. This class of persons approached to the character of what is called abroad a *conducteur*; or might be compared to the sailing-master on board a British ship of war, who follows out after his own manner the course which the captain commands him to observe. You explained to your postilion the length of your tour, and the objects you were desirous it should embrace; and you found him perfectly competent to fix the places of rest or refreshment, with due attention that those should be chosen with reference to your convenience, and to any points of interest which you might desire to visit.

The qualifications of such a person were necessarily much superior to those of the "first ready," who gallops thrice a-day over the same ten miles. Donald MacLeish, besides being quite alert at repairing all ordinary accidents to his horse and carriage, and in making shift to support them, where forage was scarce, with such substitutes as bannocks and cakes, was likewise a man of intellectual resources. He had acquired a general knowledge of the traditional stories of the country which he had traversed so often; and, if encouraged (for Donald was a man of the most decorous reserve), he would willingly point out to you the site of the principal clan-battles, and recount the most remarkable legends by which the road, and the objects which occurred in traveling it, had been distinguished. There was some originality in the man's habits of thinking and expressing himself, his turn for legendary lore strangely contrasting with a portion of the knowing shrewdness belonging to his actual occupation, which made his conversation amuse the way well enough.

Add to this, Donald knew all his peculiar duties in the country which he traversed so frequently. He could tell, to a day, when they would "be killing" lamb at Tyndrum or Glenuilt; so that the stranger would have some chance of being fed like a Christian; and knew to a mile the last village where it was possible to procure a wheaten loaf, for the guidance of those who were little familiar with the Land of Cakes. He was acquainted with the road every mile, and could tell to an inch which side of a High-

land bridge was passable, which decidedly dangerous.* In short, Donald MacLeish was not only our faithful attendant and steady servant, but our humble and obliging friend ; and though I have known the half-classical cicerone of Italy, the talkative French valet-de-place, and even the muleteer of Spain, who piques himself on being a maize-eater, and whose honor is not to be questioned without danger, I do not think I ever had so sensible and intelligent a guide.

Our motions were of course under Donald's direction ; and it frequently happened, when the weather was serene, that we preferred halting to rest his horses even where there was no established stage, and taking our refreshment under a crag, from which leaped a waterfall, or beside the verge of a fountain enameled with verdant turf and wild-flowers. Donald had an eye for such spots, and though he had, I dare say, never read *Gil Blas* or *Don Quixote*, yet he chose such halting-places as *Le Sage* or *Cervantes* would have described. Very often, as he observed the pleasure I took in conversing with the country people, he would manage to fix our place of rest near a cottage where there was some old Gael, whose broadsword had blazed at *Falkirk* or *Preston*, and who seemed the frail yet faithful record of times which had passed away. Or he would contrive to quarter us, as far as a cup of tea went, upon the hospitality of some parish minister of worth and intelligence, or some country family of the better class, who mingled with the wild simplicity of their original manners, and their ready and hospitable welcome, a sort of courtesy belonging to a people, the lowest of whom are accustomed to consider themselves as being, according to the Spanish phrase, "as good gentlemen as the king, only not quite so rich."

To all such persons Donald MacLeish was well known, and his introduction passed as current as if we had brought letters from some high chief of the country.

Sometimes it happened that the Highland hospitality which welcomed us with all the variety of mountain fare, preparations of milk and eggs, and griddle-cakes of various kinds, as well as more substantial dainties, according to the inhabitant's means of regaling the passenger, descended rather too exuberantly on Donald MacLeish in the shape of mountain dew. Poor Donald ! he was on such occasions, like *Gideon's fleece*, moist with the noble element, which, of course, fell not on us. But it was his

* This is, or was at least, a necessary accomplishment. In one of the most beautiful districts of the Highlands was, not many years since, a bridge bearing this startling caution, "Keep to the right side, the left being dangerous."

only fault, and when pressed to drink *doch-an-dorroch* to my ladyship's good health, it would have been ill taken to have refused the pledge, nor was he willing to do such discourtesy. It was, I repeat, his only fault, nor had we any great right to complain; for if it rendered him a little more talkative, it augmented his ordinary share of punctilious civility, and he only drove slower, and talked longer and more pompously than when he had not come by a drop of usquebaugh. It was, we remarked, only on such occasions that Donald talked with an air of importance of the family of MacLeish; and we had no title to be scrupulous in censuring a foible, the consequences of which were confined within such innocent limits.

We became so much accustomed to Donald's mode of managing us, that we observed with some interest the art which he used to produce a little agreeable surprise, by concealing from us the spot where he proposed our halt to be made, when it was of an unusual and interesting character. This was so much his wont, that when he made apologies at setting off, for being obliged to stop in some strange solitary place, till the horses should eat the corn which he brought on with them for that purpose, our imagination used to be on the stretch to guess what romantic retreat he had secretly fixed upon for our noontide baiting-place.

We had spent the greater part of the morning at the delightful village of Dalmally, and had gone upon the lake under the guidance of the excellent clergyman who was then incumbent at Glenorquhy,* and had heard a hundred legends of the stern chiefs of Loch Awe, Duncan with the thrum bonnet, and the other lords of the now mouldering towers of Kilchurn.† Thus it was later than usual when we set out on our journey, after a hint or two from Donald concerning the length of the way to the next stage, as there was no good halting-place between Dalmally and Oban.

Having bid adieu to our venerable and kind cicerone, we proceeded on our tour, winding round the tremendous mountain called Cruachan Ben, which rushes down in all its majesty of rocks and wilderness on the lake, leaving only a pass, in which, notwithstanding its extreme strength, the warlike clan of MacDougal of Lorn were almost destroyed by the sagacious Robert Bruce. That King, the Wellington of his day, had accomplished, by a forced march, the unexpected manœuvre of

* This venerable and hospitable gentleman's name was MacIntyre.

† An admirable account of Loch Awe will be found in the *Notes to the Bridal of Caolchairn*.

forcing a body of troops round the other side of the mountain, and thus placed him in the flank and in the rear of the men of Lorn, whom at the same time he attacked in front. The great number of cairns yet visible, as you descend the pass on the westward side, shows the extent of the vengeance which Bruce exhausted on his inveterate and personal enemies. I am, you know, the sister of soldiers, and it has since struck me forcibly that the manœuvre which Donald described, resembled those of Wellington or of Bonaparte. He was a great man Robert Bruce, even a Baliol must admit that; although it begins now to be allowed that his title to the crown was scarce so good as that of the unfortunate family with whom he contended—But let that pass.—The slaughter had been the greater, as the deep and rapid river Awe is disgorged from the lake, just in the rear of the fugitives, and encircles the base of the tremendous mountain; so that the retreat of the unfortunate flyers was intercepted on all sides by the inaccessible character of the country, which had seemed to promise them defence and protection.*

Musing, like the Irish lady in the song, “upon things which are long enough a-gone,” † we felt no impatience at the slow, and almost creeping pace, with which our conductor proceeded along General Wade’s military road, which never or rarely condescends to turn aside from the steepest ascent, but proceeds right up and down hill, with the indifference to height and hollow, steep or level, indicated by the old Roman engineers. Still, however, the substantial excellence of these great works—for such are the military highways in the Highlands—deserved the compliment of the poet, who, whether he came from our sister kingdom, and spoke in his own dialect, or whether he supposed those whom he addressed might have some national pretension to the second sight, produced the celebrated couplet—

Had you but seen these roads *before* they were made,
You would hold up your hands, and bless General Wade.

Nothing indeed can be more wonderful than to see these wildernesses penetrated and pervious in every quarter by broad accesses of the best possible construction, and so superior to what the country could have demanded for many centuries for

* *Vide* Tytler’s *Life of Bruce*.

† This is a line from a very pathetic ballad which I heard sung by one of the young ladies of Edgeworthstown in 1825. I do not know that it has been printed.

any pacific purpose of commercial intercourse. Thus the traces of war are sometimes happily accommodated to the purposes of peace. The victories of Bonaparte have been without results; but his road over the Simplon will long be the communication betwixt peaceful countries, who will apply to the ends of commerce and friendly intercourse that gigantic work, which was formed for the ambitious purpose of warlike invasion.

While we were thus stealing along, we gradually turned round the shoulder of Ben Cruachan, and, descending the course of the foaming and rapid Awe, left behind us the expanse of the majestic lake which gives birth to that impetuous river. The rocks and precipices which stooped down perpendicularly on our path on the right hand, exhibited a few remains of the wood which once clothed them, but which had, in latter times, been felled to supply, Donald MacLeish informed us, the iron-foundries at the Bunawe. This made us fix our eyes with interest on one large oak, which grew on the left hand toward the river. It seemed a tree of extraordinary magnitude and picturesque beauty, and stood just where there appeared to be a few roods of open ground lying among huge stones, which had rolled down from the mountain. To add to the romance of the situation, the spot of clear ground extended round the foot of a proud-browed rock, from the summit of which leaped a mountain stream in a fall of sixty feet, in which it was dissolved into foam and dew. At the bottom of the fall the rivulet with difficulty collected, like a routed general, its dispersed forces, and, as if tamed by its descent, found a noiseless passage through the heath to join the Awe.

I was much struck with the tree and waterfall, and wished myself nearer them; not that I thought of sketch-book or portfolio,—for, in my younger days, Misses were not accustomed to black lead pencils, unless they could use them to some good purpose,—but merely to indulge myself with a closer view. Donald immediately opened the chase-door, but observed it was rough walking down the brae, and that I would see the tree better by keeping the road for a hundred yards further, when it passed closer to the spot, for which he seemed, however, to have no predilection. “He knew,” he said, “a far bigger tree than that nearer Bunawe, and it was a place where there was flat ground for the carriage to stand, which it could jimply do on these braes;—but just as my leddyship liked.”

My ladyship did choose rather to look at the fine tree before me, than to pass it by in hopes of a finer; so we walked beside the carriage till we should come to a point, from which, Donald

assured us, we might, without scrambling, go as near the tree as we chose, "though he wadna advise us to go nearer than the high-road."

There was something grave and mysterious in Donald's sun-browned countenance when he gave us this intimation, and his manner was so different from his usual frankness, that my female curiosity was set in motion. We walked on the whilst, and I found the tree, of which we had now lost sight by the intervention of some rising ground, was really more distant than I had at first supposed. "I could have sworn now," said I to my cicerone, "that yon tree and waterfall was the very place where you intended to make a stop to-day."

"The Lord forbid!" said Donald, hastily.

"And for what, Donald? why should you be willing to pass such a pleasant spot?"

"It's ower near Dalmally, my leddy, to corn the beasts—it would bring their dinner ower near their breakfast, poor things:—an', besides, the place is not canny."

"Oh! then the mystery is out. There is a bogle or a brownie, a witch or a gyrecarlin, a bodach or a fairy, in the case?"

"The ne'er a bit, my leddy—you are clean aff the road, as I may say. But if your leddyship will just hae patience, and wait till we're by the place and out of the glen, I'll tell ye all about it. There is no much luck in speaking of such things in the place they chanced in."

I was obliged to suspend my curiosity, observing, that if I persisted in twisting the discourse one way while Donald was twining it another, I should make his objection, like a hempen-cord, just so much the tougher. At length the promised turn of the road brought us within fifty paces of the tree which I desired to admire, and I now saw, to my surprise, that there was a human habitation among the cliffs which surrounded it. It was a hut of the least dimensions, and most miserable description, that I ever saw even in the Highlands. The walls of sod or, *divot*, as the Scotch call it, were not four feet high—the roof was of turf, repaired with reeds and sedges—the chimney was composed of clay, bound round by straw ropes—and the whole walls, roof, and chimney, were alike covered with the vegetation of house-leek, rye-grass and moss, common to decayed cottages formed of such materials. There was not the slightest vestige of a kale-yard, the usual accompaniment of the very worst huts; and of living things we saw nothing, save a kid which was browsing on the roof of the hut, and a goat, its mother, at some distance, feeding betwixt the oak and the river Awe.

"What man," I could not help exclaiming, "can have committed sin deep enough to deserve such a miserable dwelling?"

"Sin enough," said Donald MacLeish, with a half-suppressed groan; "and God he knoweth, misery enough too;—and it is no man's dwelling neither, but a woman's."

"A woman's!" I repeated, "and in so lonely a place—What sort of a woman can she be?"

"Come this way, my leddy, and you may judge that for yourself," said Donald. And by advancing a few steps, and making a sharp turn to the left, we gained a sight of the side of the great broad-breasted oak, in the direction opposed to that in which we had hitherto seen it.

"If she keeps her old wont, she will be there at this hour of the day," said Donald; but immediately became silent, and pointed with his finger, as one afraid of being overheard. I looked, and beheld, not without some sense of awe, a female form seated by the stem of the oak, with her head drooping, her hands clasped, and a dark-colored mantle drawn over her head, exactly as Judah is represented in the Syrian medals as seated under her palm-tree. I was infected with the fear and reverence which my guide seemed to entertain toward this solitary being, nor did I think of advancing toward her to obtain a nearer view until I had cast an inquiring look on Donald; to which he replied in a half whisper—"She has been a fearfu' bad woman, my leddy."

"Mad woman, said you?" replied I, hearing him imperfectly; "then she is perhaps dangerous?"

"No—she is not mad," replied Donald; "for then it may be she would be happier than she is; though when she thinks on what she has done, and caused to be done, rather than yield up a hair-breadth of her ain wicked will, it is not likely she can be very well settled. But she neither is mad nor mischievous; and yet, my leddy, I think you had best not go nearer to her." And then, in a few hurried words, he made me acquainted with the story which I am now to tell more in detail. I heard the narrative with a mixture of horror and sympathy, which at once impelled me to approach the sufferer, and speak to her the words of comfort, or rather of pity, and at the same time made me afraid to do so.

This indeed was the feeling with which she was regarded by the Highlanders in the neighborhood, who looked upon Elspat MacTavish, or the Woman of the Tree, as they called her, as the Greeks considered those who were pursued by the Furies, and endured the mental torment consequent on great criminal actions. They regarded such unhappy beings as Orestes and



MACTAVISH MHOR ATTACKED BY THE SIDIER ROY.

Œdipus, as being less the voluntary perpetrators of their crimes, than as the passive instruments by which the terrible decrees of Destiny had been accomplished; and the fear with which they beheld them was not unmingled with veneration.

I also learned further from Donald MacLeish, that there was some apprehension of ill luck attending those who had the boldness to approach too near, or disturb the awful solitude of a being so unutterably miserable; that it was supposed that whosoever approached her must experience in some respect the contagion of her wretchedness.

It was therefore with some reluctance that Donald saw me prepare to obtain a nearer view of the sufferer, and that he himself followed to assist me in the descent down a very rough path. I believe his regard for me conquered some ominous feelings in his own breast, which connected his duty on this occasion with the presaging fear of lame horses, lost lynch-pins, overturns, and other perilous chances of the postilion's life.

I am not sure if my own courage would have carried me so close to Elspat, had he not followed. There was in her countenance the stern abstraction of hopeless and overpowering sorrow, mixed with the contending feelings of remorse, and of the pride which struggled to conceal it. She guessed, perhaps, that it was curiosity, arising out of her uncommon story, which induced me to intrude on her solitude—and she could not be pleased that a fate like hers had been the theme of a traveler's amusement. Yet the look with which she regarded me was one of scorn instead of embarrassment. The opinion of the world and all its children could not add or take an iota from her load of misery; and, save from the half smile that seemed to intimate the contempt of a being rapt by the very intensity of her affliction above the sphere of ordinary humanities, she seemed as indifferent to my gaze as if she had been a dead corpse or a marble statue.

Elspat was above the middle stature; her hair, now grizzled, was still profuse, and it had been of the most decided black. So were her eyes, in which, contradicting the stern and rigid features of her countenance, there shone the wild and troubled light that indicates an unsettled mind. Her hair was wrapt round a silver bodkin with some attention to neatness, and her dark mantle was disposed around her with a degree of taste, though the materials were of the most ordinary sort.

After gazing on this victim of guilt and calamity till I was ashamed to remain silent, though uncertain how I ought to address her, I began to express my surprise at her choosing such

a desert and deplorable dwelling. She cut short these expressions of sympathy, by answering in a stern voice, without the least change of countenance or posture—"Daughter of the stranger, he has told you my story." I was silenced at once, and felt how little all earthly accommodation must seem to the mind which had such subjects as hers for rumination. Without again attempting to open the conversation, I took a piece of gold from my purse (for Donald had intimated she lived on alms), expecting she would at least stretch her hand to receive it. But she neither accepted nor rejected the gift—she did not even seem to notice it, though twenty times as valuable, probably, as was usually offered. I was obliged to place it on her knee, saying involuntarily, as I did so, "May God pardon you, and relieve you!" I shall never forget the look which she cast up to Heaven, nor the tone in which she exclaimed, in the very words of my old friend, John Home—

"My beautiful—my brave!"

It was the language of nature, and arose from the heart of the deprived mother, as it did from that gifted imaginative poet, while furnishing with appropriate expressions the ideal grief of Lady Randolph.

CHAPTER SECOND.

Oh, I'm come to the Low Country,
Och, och, ohonochie,
Without a penny in my pouch
To buy a meal for me.
I was the proudest of my clan,
Long, long may I repine;
And Donald was the bravest man,
And Donald he was mine.

OLD SONG.

ELSPAT had enjoyed happy days, though her age had sunk into hopeless and inconsolable sorrow and distress. She was once the beautiful and happy wife of Hamish MacTavish, for whom his strength and feats of prowess had gained the title of MacTavish Mhor. His life was turbulent and dangerous, his habits being of the old Highland stamp, which esteemed it shame to want anything that could be had for the taking. Those in the Lowland line, who lay near him, and desired to

enjoy their lives and property in quiet, were contented to pay him a small composition, in the name of protection money, and comforted themselves with the old proverb, that it was better to "fleech the deil than fight him." Others, who accounted such composition dishonorable, were often surprised by MacTavish Mhor, and his associates and followers, who usually inflicted an adequate penalty, either in person or property, or both. The creagh is yet remembered, in which he swept one hundred and fifty cows from Monteith in one drove; and how he placed the Laird of Ballybught naked in a slough, for having threatened to send for a party of the Highland Watch to protect his property.

Whatever were occasionally the triumphs of this daring cateran, they were often exchanged for reverses; and his narrow escapes, rapid flights, and the ingenious stratagems with which he extricated himself from eminent danger, were no less remembered and admired than the exploits in which he had been successful. In weal or woe, through every species of fatigue, difficulty, and danger, Elspat was his faithful companion. She enjoyed with him the fits of occasional prosperity; and when adversity pressed them hard, her strength of mind, readiness of wit, and courageous endurance of danger and toil, are said often to have stimulated the exertions of her husband.

Their morality was of the old Highland cast, faithful friends and fierce enemies; the Lowland herds and harvests they accounted their own, whenever they had the means of driving off the one, or of seizing upon the other; nor did the least scruple on the right of property interfere on such occasions. Hamish Mhor argued like the old Cretan warrior:—

My sword, my spear, my shaggy shield,
They make me lord of all below;
For he who dreads the lance to wield,
Before my shaggy shield must bow.
His lands, his vineyards must resign,
And all that cowards have is mine.

But those days of perilous, though frequently successful depredation, began to be abridged, after the failure of the expedition of Prince Charles Edward. MacTavish Mhor had not sat still on that occasion, and he was outlawed, both as a traitor to the state, and as a robber and cateran. Garrisons were now settled in many places where a red-coat had never before been seen, and the Saxon war-drum resounded among the most hidden recesses of the Highland mountains. The fate of MacTavish became every day more inevitable; and it

was the more difficult for him to make his exertions for defence or escape, that Elspat, amid his evil days, had increased his family with an infant child, which was a considerable encumbrance upon the necessary rapidity of their motions.

At length the fatal day arrived. In a strong pass on the skirts of Ben Cruachan, the celebrated MacTavish Mhor was surprised by a detachment of the Sidier Roy.* His wife assisted him heroically, charging his piece from time to time ; and as they were in possession of a post that was nearly unassailable, he might have perhaps escaped if his ammunition had lasted. But at length his balls were expended, although it was not until he had fired off most of the silver buttons from his waistcoat, and the soldiers, no longer deterred by fear of the unerring marksman, who had slain three, and wounded more of their number, approached his stronghold, and, unable to take him alive, slew him, after a most desperate resistance.

All this Elspat witnessed and survived, for she had, in the child which relied on her for support, a motive for strength and exertion. In what manner she maintained herself it is not easy to say. Her only ostensible means of support were a flock of three or four goats, which she fed wherever she pleased on the mountain pastures, no one challenging the intrusion. In the general distress of the country, her ancient acquaintances had little to bestow ; but what they could part with from their own necessities, they willingly devoted to the relief of others. From Lowlanders she sometimes demanded tribute, rather than requested alms. She had not forgotten she was the widow of MacTavish Mhor, or that the child who trotted by her knee, might, such were her imaginations, emulate one day the fame of his father, and command the same influence which he had once exerted without control. She associated so little with others, went so seldom and so unwillingly from the wildest recesses of the mountains, where she usually dwelt with her goats, that she was quite unconscious of the great change which had taken place in the country around her, the substitution of civil order for military violence, and the strength gained by the law and its adherents over those who were called in Gaelic song, "the stormy sons of the sword." Her own diminished consequence and straitened circumstances she indeed felt, but for this the death of MacTavish Mhor was, in her apprehension, a sufficing reason ; and she doubted not that she should rise to her former state of importance, when Hamish Baen (or Fair-haired James) should be able to wield the arms of his father.

* The Red Soldier.

If, then, Elspat was repelled rudely when she demanded anything necessary for her wants, or the accommodation of her little flock, by a churlish farmer, her threats of vengeance, obscurely expressed, yet terrible in their tenor, used frequently to extort, through fear of her maledictions, the relief which was denied to her necessities; and the trembling goodwife, who gave meal or money to the widow of MacTavish Mhor, wished in her heart that the stern old carlin had been burnt on the day her husband had his due.

Years thus ran on, and Hamish Baen grew up, not indeed to be of his father's size or strength, but to become an active, high-spirited, fair-haired youth, with a ruddy cheek, and eye like an eagle, and all the agility, if not all the strength, of his formidable father, upon whose history and achievements his mother dwelt, in order to form her son's mind to a similar course of adventures. But the young see the present state of this changeful world more keenly than the old. Much attached to his mother, and disposed to do all in his power for her support, Hamish yet perceived, when he mixed with the world, that the trade of the cateran was now alike dangerous and discreditable, and that if he were to emulate his father's prowess, it must be in some other line of warfare, more consonant to the opinions of the present day.

As the faculties of mind and body began to expand, he became more sensible of the precarious nature of his situation, of the erroneous views of his mother, and her ignorance respecting the changes of the society with which she mingled so little. In visiting friends and neighbors, he became aware of the extremely reduced scale to which his parent was limited, and learned that she possessed little or nothing more than the absolute necessities of life, and that these were sometimes on the point of failing. At times his success in fishing and the chase was able to add something to her subsistence; but he saw no regular means of contributing to her support, unless by stooping to servile labor, which, if he himself could have endured it, would, he knew, have been like a death's-wound to the pride of his mother.

Elspat, meanwhile, saw with surprise, that Hamish Baen, although now tall and fit for the field, showed no disposition to enter on his father's scene of action. There was something of the mother at her heart, which prevented her from urging him in plain terms to take the field as a cateran, for the fear occurred of the perils into which the trade must conduct him; and when she would have spoken to him on the subject, it seemed to her heated imagination as if the ghost of her hus-

band arose between them in his bloody tartans, and, laying his finger on his lips, appeared to prohibit the topic. Yet she wondered at what seemed his want of spirit, sighed as she saw him from day to day lounging about in the long-skirted Lowland coat, which the legislature had imposed upon the Gael instead of their own romantic garb, and thought how much nearer he would have resembled her husband, had he been clad in the belted plaid, and short hose, with his polished arms gleaming at his side.

Besides these subjects for anxiety, Elspat had others arising from the engrossing impetuosity of her temper. Her love of MacTavish Mhor had been qualified by respect and sometimes even by fear; for the cateran was not the species of man who submits to female government; but over his son she had exerted, at first during childhood, and afterward in early youth, an imperious authority, which gave her maternal love a character of jealousy. She could not bear, when Hamish, with advancing life, made repeated steps toward independence, absented himself from her cottage at such season, and for such length of time as he chose, and seemed to consider, although maintaining toward her every possible degree of respect and kindness, that the control and responsibility of his actions rested on himself alone. This would have been of little consequence, could she have concealed her feelings within her own bosom; but the ardor and impatience of her passions made her frequently show her son that she conceived herself neglected and ill-used. When he was absent for any length of time from her cottage, without giving intimation of his purpose, her resentment on his return used to be so unreasonable, that it naturally suggested to a young man, fond of independence, and desirous to amend his situation in the world, to leave her, even for the very purpose of enabling him to provide for the parent whose egotistical demands on his filial attention tended to confine him to a desert, in which both were starving in hopeless and helpless indigence.

Upon one occasion, the son having been guilty of some independent excursion, by which the mother felt herself affronted and disobliged, she had been more than usually violent on his return, and awakened in Hamish a sense of displeasure, which clouded his brow and cheek. At length, as she persevered in her unreasonable resentment, his patience became exhausted, and taking his gun from the chimney corner, and muttering to himself the reply which his respect for his mother prevented him from speaking aloud, he was about to leave the hut which he had but barely entered.

"Hamish," said his mother, "are you again about to leave me?" But Hamish only replied by looking at and rubbing the lock of his gun.

"Ay, rub the lock of your gun," said his parent, bitterly; "I am glad you have courage enough to fire it, though it be but at a roe-deer." Hamish started at this undeserved taunt, and cast a look of anger at her in reply. She saw that she had found the means of giving him pain.

"Yes," she said, "look fierce as you will at an old woman, and your mother; it would be long ere you bent your brow on the angry countenance of a bearded man."

"Be silent, mother, or speak of what you understand," said Hamish, much irritated, "and that is of the distaff and the spindle."

"And was it of spindle and distaff that I was thinking when I bore you away on my back through the fire of six of the Saxon soldiers, and you a wailing child? I tell you, Hamish, I know a hundred-fold more of swords and guns than ever you will; and you will never learn so much of noble war by yourself, as you have seen when you were wrapt up in my plaid."

"You are determined at least to allow me no peace at home, mother; but this shall have an end," said Hamish, as, resuming his purpose of leaving the hut, he rose and went toward the door.

"Stay, I command you," said his mother; "stay, or may the gun you carry be the means of your ruin—may the road you are going be the track of your funeral!"

"What makes you use such words, mother?" said the young man, turning a little back—"they are not good, and good cannot come of them. Farewell just now; we are too angry to speak together—farewell; it will be long ere you see me again." And he departed, his mother, in the first burst of her impatience, showering after him her maledictions, and in the next invoking them on her own head, so that they might spare her son's. She passed that day and the next in all the vehemence of impotent and yet unrestrained passion, now entreating Heaven, and such powers as were familiar to her by rude tradition, to restore her dear son, "the calf of her heart;" now in impatient resentment, meditating with what bitter terms she should rebuke his filial disobedience upon his return, and now studying the most tender language to attach him to the cottage, which, when her boy was present, she would not, in the rapture of her affection, have exchanged for the apartments of Taymouth Castle.

Two days passed, during which, neglecting even the slender

means of supporting nature which her situation afforded, nothing but the strength of a frame accustomed to hardships and privations of every kind, could have kept her in existence, notwithstanding the anguish of her mind prevented her being sensible of her personal weakness. Her dwelling, at this period, was the same cottage near which I had found her, but then more habitable by the exertions of Hamish, by whom it had been in a great measure built and repaired.

It was on the third day after her son had disappeared, as she sat at the door rocking herself, after the fashion of her countrywomen when in distress or in pain, that the then unwonted circumstance occurred of a passenger being seen on the highroad above the cottage. She cast but one glance at him—he was on horseback, so that it could not be Hamish, and Elspat cared not enough for any other being on earth to make her turn her eyes toward him a second time. The stranger, however, paused opposite to her cottage, and dismounting from his pony, led it down the steep and broken path which conducted to the door.

“God bless you, Elspat MacTavish!”—She looked at the man as he addressed her in her native language, with the displeased air of one whose reverie is interrupted; but the traveler went on to say, “I bring you tidings of your son Hamish.” At once from being the most uninteresting object, in respect to Elspat, that could exist, the form of the stranger became awful in her eyes, as that of a messenger descended from Heaven, expressly to pronounce upon her death or life. She started from her seat, and with hands convulsively clasped together, and held up to Heaven, eyes fixed on the stranger’s countenance, and person stooping forward to him, she looked those inquiries, which her faltering tongue could not articulate. “Your son sends you his dutiful remembrance and this,” said the messenger, putting into Elspat’s hand a small purse containing four or five dollars.

“He is gone he is gone!” exclaimed Elspat; “he has sold himself to be the servant of the Saxons, and I shall never more behold him! Tell me, Miles MacPhadraick, for now I know you, is it the price of the son’s blood that you have put into the mother’s hand?”

“Now, God forbid!” answered MacPhadraick, who was a tacksman, and had possession of a considerable tract of ground under his Chief, a proprietor who lived about twenty miles off—“God forbid I should do wrong, or say wrong, to you, or to the son of MacTavish Mhor! I swear to you by the hand of my Chief, that your son is well, and will soon see you, and the rest

he will tell you himself." So saying, MacPhadraig hastened back up the pathway, gained the road, mounted his pony, and rode upon his way.

CHAPTER THIRD.

ELSPAT MACTAVISH remained gazing on the money, as if the impress of the coin could have conveyed information how it was procured.

"I love not this MacPhadraig," she said to herself; "it was his race of whom the Bard hath spoken, saying, Fear them not when their words are loud as the winter's wind, but fear them when they fall on you like the sound of the thrush's song. And yet this riddle can be read but one way: My son hath taken the sword, to win that with strength like a man, which churls would keep him from with the swords that frighten children." This idea, when once it occurred to her, seemed the more reasonable, that MacPhadraig, as she well knew, himself a cautious man, had so far encouraged her husband's practices, as occasionally to buy cattle of MacTavish, although he must have well known now they were come by, taking care, however, that the transaction was so made, as to be accompanied with great profit and absolute safety. Who so likely as MacPhadraig to indicate to a young cateran the glen in which he could commence his perilous trade with most prospect of success? who so likely to convert his booty into money? The feelings which another might have experienced on believing that an only son had rushed forward on the same path in which his father had perished, were scarce known to the Highland mothers of that day. She thought of the death of MacTavish Mhor as that of a hero who had fallen in his proper trade of war, and who had not fallen unavenged. She feared less for her son's life than for his dishonor. She dreaded on his account the subjection to strangers, and the death-sleep of the soul which is brought on by what she regarded as slavery.

The moral principle which so naturally and so justly occurs to the mind of those who have been educated under a settled government of laws that protect the property of the weak against the incursions of the strong, was to poor Elspat a book sealed and a fountain closed. She had been taught to consider those whom they called Saxons as a race with whom the Gael were constantly at war, and she regarded every settlement of theirs

within the reach of Highland incursion, as affording a legitimate object of attack and plunder. Her feelings on this point had been strengthened and confirmed, not only by the desire of revenge for the death of her husband, but by the sense of general indignation entertained, not unjustly, through the Highlands of Scotland, on account of the barbarous and violent conduct of the victors after the battle of Culloden. Other Highland clans, too, she regarded as the fair objects of plunder when that was possible, upon the score of ancient enmities and deadly feuds.

The prudence that might have weighed the slender means which the times afforded for resisting the efforts of a combined government, which had, in its less compact and established authority, been unable to put down the ravages of such lawless caterans as MacTavish Mhor, was unknown to a solitary woman, whose ideas still dwelt upon her own early times. She imagined that her son had only to proclaim himself his father's successor in adventure and enterprise, and that a force of men as gallant as those who had followed his father's banner would crowd around to support it when again displayed. To her, Hamish was the eagle who had only to soar aloft and resume his native place in the skies, without her being able to comprehend how many additional eyes would have watched his flight, how many additional bullets would have been directed at his bosom. To be brief, Elspat was one who viewed the present state of society with the same feelings with which she regarded the times that had passed away. She had been indigent, neglected, oppressed, since the days that her husband had no longer been feared and powerful, and she thought that the term of her ascendance would return when her son had determined to play the part of his father. If she permitted her eye to glance further into futurity, it was but to anticipate that she must be for many a day cold in the grave, with the coronach of her tribe cried duly over her, before her fair-haired Hamish could, according to her calculation, die with his hand on the basket-hilt of the red claymore. His father's hair was gray, ere, after a hundred dangers, he had fallen with his arms in his hands. That she should have seen and survived the sight, was a natural consequence of the manners of that age. And better it was—such was her proud thought—that she had seen him so die, than to have witnessed his departure from life in a smoky hovel—on a bed of rotten straw, like an over-worn hound, or a bullock which died of disease. But the hour of her young, her brave Hamish, was yet far distant. He must succeed—he must conquer, like his father. And when he fell at length,—for she anticipated for

him no bloodless death,—Elspat would ere then have lain long in the grave, and could neither see his death-struggle, nor mourn over his grave-sod.

With such wild notions working in her brain, the spirit of Elspat rose to its usual pitch, or rather to one which seemed higher. In the emphatic language of Scripture, which in that idiom does not greatly differ from her own, she arose, she washed and changed her apparel, and ate bread, and was refreshed.

She longed eagerly for the return of her son, but she now longed not with the bitter anxiety of doubt and apprehension. She said to herself, that much must be done ere he could, in these times, arise to be an eminent and dreaded leader. Yet when she saw him again, she almost expected him at the head of a daring band, with pipes playing, and banners flying, the noble tartans fluttering free in the wind, in spite of the laws which had suppressed, under severe penalties, the use of the national garb, and all the appurtenances of Highland Chivalry. For all this, her eager imagination was content only to allow the interval of some days.

From the moment this opinion had taken deep and serious possession of her mind, her thoughts were bent upon receiving her son at the head of his adherents, in the manner in which she used to adorn her hut for the return of his father.

The substantial means of subsistence she had not the power of providing, nor did she consider that of importance. The successful caterans would bring with them herds and flocks. But the interior of her hut was arranged for their reception—the usquebaugh was brewed, or distilled, in a larger quantity than it could have been supposed one lone woman could have made ready. Her hut was put into such order as might, in some degree, give it the appearance of a day of rejoicing. It was swept, and decorated with boughs of various kinds, like the house of a Jewess, upon what is termed the Feast of the Tabernacles. The produce of the milk of her little flock was prepared in as great variety of forms as her skill admitted, to entertain her son and his associates, whom she expected to receive along with him.

But the principal decoration, which she sought with the greatest toil, was the cloud-berry, a scarlet fruit, which is only found on very high hills, and there only in very small quantities. Her husband, or perhaps one of his forefathers, had chosen this as the emblem of his family, because it seemed at once to imply by its scarcity the smallness of their clan, and by the places in which it was found, the ambitious height of their pretensions.

For the time that these simple preparations for welcome endured, Elspat was in a state of troubled happiness. In fact, her only anxiety was, that she might be able to complete all that she could do to welcome Hamish and the friends who she supposed must have attached themselves to his band before they should arrive, and find her unprovided for their reception.

But when such efforts as she could make had been accomplished, she once more had nothing left to engage her save the trifling care of her goats; and when these had been attended to, she had only to review her little preparations, renew such as were of a transitory nature, replace decayed branches, and fading boughs, and then to sit down at her cottage door and watch the road, as it ascended on the one side from the banks of the Awe, and on the other wound round the heights of the mountain, with such a degree of accommodation to hill and level as the plan of the military engineer permitted. While so occupied, her imagination, anticipating the future from recollections of the past, formed out of the morning-mist, or the evening-cloud, the wild forms of an advancing band, which were then called "Sidier Dhu,"—dark soldiers—dressed in their native tartan, and so named to distinguish them from the scarlet ranks of the British army. In this occupation she spent many hours of each morning and evening.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

It was in vain that Elspat's eyes surveyed the distant path by the earliest light of the dawn and the latest glimmer of the twilight. No rising dust awakened the expectation of nodding plumes or flashing arms; the solitary traveler trudged listlessly along in his brown lowland great-coat, his tartans dyed black or purple, to comply with, or evade, the law, which prohibited their being worn in their variegated hues. The spirit of the Gael, sunk and broken by the severe though perhaps necessary laws that proscribed the dress and arms which he considered as his birthright, was intimated by his drooping head and dejected appearance. Not in such depressed wanderers did Elspat recognize the light and free step of her son, now, as she concluded, regenerated from every sign of Saxon thralldom. Night by night, as darkness came, she removed from her unclosed door to throw herself on her restless pallet, not to sleep,

but to watch. The brave and the terrible, she said, walk by night—their steps are heard in darkness, when all is silent save the whirlwind and the cataract—the timid deer comes only forth when the sun is upon the mountain's peak ; but the bold wolf walks in the red light of the harvest-moon. She reasoned in vain—her son's expected summons did not call her from the lowly couch, where she lay dreaming of his approach. Hamish came not.

“Hope deferred,” saith the royal sage, “maketh the heart sick ;” and strong as was Elspat's constitution, she began to experience that it was unequal to the toils to which her anxious and immoderate affection subjected her, when early one morning the appearance of a traveler on the lonely mountain-road revived hopes which had begun to sink into listless despair. There was no sign of Saxon subjugation about the stranger. At a distance she could see the flutter of the belted-plaid, that drooped in graceful folds behind him, and the plume that, placed in the bonnet, showed rank and gentle birth. He carried a gun over his shoulder, the claymore was swinging by his side, with its usual appendages, the dirk, the pistol, and the *sporrán mollach*.* Ere yet her eye had scanned all these particulars, the light step of the traveler was hastened, his arm was waved in token of recognition—a moment more, and Elspat held in her arms her darling son, dressed in the garb of his ancestors, and looking, in her matronate eyes, the fairest among ten thousand !

The first outpouring of affection it would be impossible to describe. Blessings mingled with the most endearing epithets which her energetic language affords, in striving to express the wild rapture of Elspat's joy. Her board was heaped hastily with all she had to offer ; and the mother watched the young soldier as he partook of the refreshment, with feelings how similar to, yet how different from, those with which she had seen him draw his first sustenance from her bosom !

When the tumult of joy was appeased, Elspat became anxious to know her son's adventures since they parted, and could not help greatly censuring his rashness for traversing the hills in the Highland dress in the broad sunshine, when the penalty was so heavy, and so many red soldiers were abroad in the country.

“Fear not for me, mother,” said Hamish, in a tone designed to relieve her anxiety, and yet somewhat embarrassed ; “I may wear the *breacan*† at the gate of Fort-Augustus, if I like it.”

*The goat-skin pouch, worn by the Highlanders round their waist.

† That which is variegated, *i. e.* the tartan.

"Oh, be not too daring, my beloved Hamish, though it be the fault which best becomes thy father's son—yet be not too daring! Alas, they fight not now as in former days, with fair weapons, and on equal terms, but take odds of numbers and of arms, so that the feeble and the strong are alike leveled by the shot of a boy. And do not think me unworthy to be called your father's widow, and your mother, because I speak thus; for God knoweth, that, man to man, I would peril thee against the best in Breadalbane, and broad Lorn besides."

"I assure you, my dearest mother," replied Hamish, "that I am in no danger. But have you seen MacPhadraick, mother, and what has he said to you on my account?"

"Silver he left me in plenty, Hamish; but the best of his comfort was, that you were well, and would see me soon. But beware of MacPhadraick, my son; for when he called himself the friend of your father, he better loved the most worthless stirk in his herd than he did the life-blood of MacTavish Mhor. Use his services, therefore, and pay him for them—for it is thus we should deal with the unworthy; but take my counsel, and trust him not."

Hamish could not suppress a sigh, which seemed to Elspat to intimate that the caution came too late. "What have you done with him," she continued, eager and alarmed. "I had money of him, and he gives not that without value—he is none of those who exchange barley for chaff. Oh, if you repent you of your bargain, and if it be one which you may break off without disgrace to your truth or your manhood, take back his silver, and trust not to his fair words."

"It may not be, mother," said Hamish; "I do not repent my engagement, unless that it must make me leave you soon."

"Leave me! how leave me? Silly boy, think you I know not what duty belongs to the wife or mother of a daring man? Thou art but a boy yet; and when thy father had been the dread of the country for twenty years, he did not despise my company and assistance, but often said my help was worth that of two strong gillies."

"It is not on that score, mother; but since I must leave the country"—

"Leave the country!" replied the mother, interrupting him; "and think you that I am like a bush, that is rooted to the soil where it grows, and must die if carried elsewhere? I have breathed other winds than these of Ben Cruachan—I have followed your father to the wilds of Ross, and the impenetrable deserts of Y Mac Y Mhor—Tush, man, my limbs, old as

they are, will bear me as far as your young feet can trace the way."

"Alas, mother," said the young man, with a faltering accent, "but to cross the sea"—

"The sea! who am I that I should fear the sea! Have I never been in a birling in my life—never known the Sound of Mull, the Isles of Treshornish, and the rough rocks of Harris?"

"Alas, mother, I go far, far from all of these—I am enlisted in one of the new regiments, and we go against the French in America."

"Enlisted!" uttered the astonished mother—"against *my* will—without *my* consent—you could not,—you would not,"—then rising up, and assuming a posture of almost imperial command, "Hamish, you DARED not!"

"Despair, mother, dares everything," answered Hamish, in a tone of melancholy resolution. "What should I do here, where I can scarce get bread for myself and you, and when the times are growing daily worse? Would you but sit down and listen, I would convince you I have acted for the best."

With a bitter smile Elspat sat down, and the same severe ironical expression was on her features, as, with her lips firmly closed, she listened to his vindication.

Hamish went on, without being disconcerted by her expected displeasure. "When I left you, dearest mother, it was to go to MacPhadraick's house; for although I knew he is crafty and worldly, after the fashion of the Sassenach, yet he is wise, and I thought how he would teach me, as it would cost him nothing, in which way I could mend our estate in the world."

"Our estate in the world!" said Elspat, losing patience at the word; "and went you to a base fellow, with a soul no better than that of a cowherd, to ask counsel about your conduct? Your father asked none, save of his courage and his sword."

"Dearest mother," answered Hamish, "how shall I convince you that you live in this land of our fathers, as if our fathers were yet living? You walk as it were in a dream, surrounded by the phantoms of those who have been long with the dead. When my father lived and fought, the great respected the man of the strong right hand, and the rich feared him. He had protection from MacAllum More, and from Caberfae,* and tribute from meaner men. That is ended, and his son would only earn a disgraceful and unpitied death, by the practices which gave his father credit and power among those who wear

* Caberfae—*Anglice*, the Stag's head,—the Celtic designation for the arms of the family of the high Chief of Seaforth (Mackenzie).

the breacan. The land is conquered—its lights are quenched—Glengary, Lochiel, Perth, Lord Lewis, all the high chiefs are dead or in exile—We may mourn for it, but we cannot help it. Bonnet, broadsword, and sporran—power, strength, and wealth, were all lost on Drummoissie Muir.” *

“It is false !” said Elspat, fiercely ; “you, and such like dastardly spirits, are quelled by your own faint hearts, not by the strength of the enemy ; you are like the fearful waterfowl, to whom the least cloud in the sky seems the shadow of the eagle.”

“Mother,” said Hamish, proudly, “lay not faint heart to my charge. I go where men are wanted who have strong arms and bold hearts too. I leave a desert for a land where I may gather fame.”

“And you leave your mother to perish in want, age, and solitude,” said Elspat, essaying successively every means of moving a resolution, which she began to see was more deeply rooted than she had at first thought.

“Not so, neither,” he answered ; “I leave you to comfort and certainty, which you have yet never known. Barcaldine’s son is made a leader, and with him I have enrolled myself ; MacPhadraick acts for him, and raises men, and finds his own in doing it.”

“That is the truest word of the tale, were all the rest as false as hell,” said the old woman, bitterly.

“But we are to find our good in it also,” continued Hamish ; “for Barcaldine is to give you a shieling in his wood of Letterfindreight, with grass for your goats, and a cow, when you please to have one, on the common ; and my own pay, dearest mother, though I am far away, will do more than provide you with meal and with all else you can want. Do not fear for me. I enter a private gentleman ; but I will return, if hard fighting and regular duty can deserve it, an officer, and with half-a-dollar a-day.”

“Poor child !”—replied Elspat, in a tone of pity mingled with contempt, “and you trust MacPhadraick ?”

“I might, mother,”—said Hamish, the dark red color of his race crossing his forehead and cheeks, “for MacPhadraick knows the blood which flows in my veins, and is aware, that should he break trust with you, he might count the days which could bring Hamish back to Breadalbane ; and number those of his life within three suns more. I would kill him at his own hearth did he break his word with me—I would, by the great Being who made us both !”

* [The battle-field of Culloden.]

The look and attitude of the young soldier for a moment overawed Elspat ; she was unused to see him express a deep and bitter mood, which reminded her so strongly of his father, but she resumed her remonstrances in the same taunting manner in which she had commenced them.

“Poor boy !” she said ; “and you think that at the distance of half the world your threats will be heard or thought of ! But, go—go—place your neck under him of Hanover’s yoke against whom every true Gael fought to the death.—Go, disown the royal Stuart, for whom your father, and his fathers, and your mother’s fathers, have crimsoned many a field with their blood.—Go, put your head under the belt of one of the race of Dermid, whose children murdered—yes,” she added with a wild shriek, “murdered your mother’s fathers in their peaceful dwellings in Glencoe !—Yes,” she again exclaimed, with a wilder and shriller scream, “I was then unborn, but my mother has told me—and I attended to the voice of *my* mother—Well I remember her words !—They came in peace, and were received in friendship, and blood and fire arose, and screams, and murder !” *

“Mother,” answered Hamish, mournfully, but with a decided tone, “all that I have thought over—there is not a drop of the blood of Glencoe on the noble hand of Barcaldine—with the unhappy house of Glenlyon the curse remains, and on them God hath avenged it.”

“You speak like the Saxon priest already,” replied his mother ; “will you not better stay, and ask a kirk from Mac-Allum More, that you may preach forgiveness to the race of Dermid ?”

“Yesterday was yesterday,” answered Hamish, “and to-day is to-day. When the clans are crushed and confounded together, it is well and wise that their hatreds and their feuds should not survive their independence and their power. He that cannot execute vengeance like a man should not harbor useless enmity like a craven. Mother, young Barcaldine is true and brave ; I know that MacPhadraick counseled him, that he should not let me take leave of you, lest you dissuaded me from my purpose ; but he said, ‘Hamish MacTavish is the son of a brave man, and he will not break his word.’ Mother, Barcaldine leads an hundred of the bravest of the sons of the Gael in their native dress, and with their fathers’ arms—heart to heart—shoulder to shoulder. I have sworn to go with him—He has trusted me, and I will trust him.”

* [A succinct account of the Massacre of Glencoe will be found in Scott’s *Poetical Works*.]

At this reply, so firmly and resolutely pronounced, Elspat remained like one thunderstruck, and sunk in despair. The arguments which she had considered so irresistibly conclusive, had recoiled like a wave from a rock. After a long pause, she filled her son's quaigh, and presented it to him with an air of dejected deference and submission.

"Drink," she said, "to thy father's roof-tree, ere you leave it for ever; and tell me, since the chains of a new King, and of a new Chief, whom your fathers knew not save as mortal enemies, are fastened upon the limbs of your father's son,—tell me how many links you count upon them?"

Hamish took the cup, but looked at her as if uncertain of her meaning. She proceeded in a raised voice. "Tell me," she said, "for I have a right to know, for how many days the will of those you have made your masters permits me to look upon you?—In other words, how many are the days of my life—for when you leave me, the earth has nought besides worth living for!"

"Mother," replied Hamish MacTavish, "for six days I may remain with you, and if you will set out with me on the fifth, I will conduct you in safety to your new dwelling. But if you remain here, then I will depart on the seventh by daybreak—then, as at the last moment, I must set out for Dumbarton, for if I appear not on the eighth day, I am subject to punishment as a deserter, and dishonored as a soldier and a gentleman."

"Your father's foot," she answered, "was free as the wind on the heath—it were as vain to say to him, where goest thou, as to ask that viewless driver of the clouds, wherefore blowest thou? Tell me under what penalty thou must—since go thou must, and go thou wilt—return to thy thralldom?"

"Call it not thralldom, mother, it is the service of an honorable soldier—the only service which is now open to the son of MacTavish Mhor."

"Yet say what is the penalty if thou shouldst not return!" replied Elspat.

"Military punishment as a deserter," answered Hamish; writhing, however, as his mother failed not to observe, under some internal feelings, which she resolved to probe to the uttermost.

"And that," she said, with assumed calmness, which her glancing eye disowned, "is the punishment of a disobedient hound, is it not?"

"Ask me no more, mother," said Hamish; "the punishment is nothing to one who will never deserve it."

"To me it is something," replied Elspat, "since I know

better than thou, that where there is power to inflict, there is often the will to do so without cause. I would pray for thee, Hamish, and I must know against what evils I should beseech Him who leaves none unguarded, to protect thy youth and simplicity."

"Mother," said Hamish, "it signifies little to what a criminal may be exposed, if a man is determined not to be such. Our Highland chiefs used also to punish their vassals, and, as I have heard, severely.—Was it not Lachlan MacIan, whom we remember of old, whose head was struck off by order of his chieftain for shooting at the stag before him?"

"Ay," said Elspat, "and right he had to lose it, since he dishonored the father of the people even in the face of the assembled clan. But the chiefs were noble in their ire—they punished with the sharp blade, and not with the baton. Their punishments drew blood, but they did not infer dishonor. Canst thou say the same for the laws under whose yoke thou hast placed thy freeborn neck?"

"I cannot—mother—I cannot," said Hamish, mournfully. "I saw them punish a Sassenach for deserting, as they called it, his banner. He was scourged—I own it—scourged like a hound who has offended an imperious master. I was sick at the sight—I confess it. But the punishment of dogs is only for those worse than dogs, who know not how to keep their faith."

"To this infamy, however, thou hast subjected thyself, Hamish," replied Elspat, "if thou shouldst give, or thy officers take measures of offence against thee.—I speak no more to thee on thy purpose.—Were the sixth day from this morning's sun my dying day, and thou wert to stay to close mine eyes, thou wouldst run the risk of being lashed like a dog at a post—yes! unless thou hadst the gallant heart to leave me to die alone, and upon my desolate hearth, the last spark of thy father's fire, and of thy forsaken mother's life, to be extinguished together!"—Hamish traversed the hut with an impatient and angry pace.

"Mother," he said at length, "concern not yourself about such things. I cannot be subjected to such infamy, for never will I deserve it; and were I threatened with it, I should know how to die before I was so far dishonored."

"There spoke the son of the husband of my heart!" replied Elspat; and she changed the discourse, and seemed to listen in melancholy acquiescence, when her son reminded her how short the time was which they were permitted to pass in each other's society, and entreated that it might be spent without useless

and unpleasant recollections respecting the circumstances under which they must soon be separated.

Elspat was now satisfied that her son, with some of his father's other properties, preserved the haughty masculine spirit which rendered it impossible to divert him from a resolution which he had deliberately adopted. She assumed, therefore, an exterior of apparent submission to their inevitable separation ; and if she now and then broke out into complaints and murmurs, it was either that she could not altogether suppress the natural impetuosity of her temper, or because she had the wit to consider, that a total and unreserved acquiescence might have seemed to her son constrained and suspicious, and induced him to watch and defeat the means by which she still hoped to prevent his leaving her. Her ardent, though selfish affection for her son, incapable of being qualified by a regard for the true interests of the unfortunate object of her attachment, resembled the instinctive fondness of the animal race for their offspring ; and, diving little further into futurity than one of the inferior creatures, she only felt, that to be separated from Hamish was to die.

In the brief interval permitted them, Elspat exhausted every art which affection could devise, to render agreeable to him the space which they were apparently to spend with each other. Her memory carried her far back into former days, and her stores of legendary history, which furnish at all times a principal amusement of the Highlander in his moments of repose, were augmented by an unusual acquaintance with the songs of ancient bards, and traditions of the most approved Seannachies and tellers of tales. Her officious attentions to her son's accommodation, indeed, were so unremitted as almost to give him pain ; and he endeavored quietly to prevent her from taking so much personal toil in selecting the blooming heath for his bed, or preparing the meal for his refreshment. " Let me alone, Hamish," she would reply on such occasions ; " you follow your own will in departing from your mother, let your mother have hers in doing what gives her pleasure while you remain."

So much she seemed to be reconciled to the arrangements which he had made in her behalf, that she could hear him speak to her of her removing to the lands of Green Colin, as the gentleman was called, on whose estate he had provided her an asylum. In truth, however, nothing could be further from her thoughts. From what he had said during their first violent dispute, Elspat had gathered, that if Hamish returned not by the appointed time permitted by his furlough, he would incur the hazard of corporal punishment. Were he placed within the

risk of being thus dishonored, she was well ware that he would never submit to the disgrace by return to the regiment where it might be inflicted. Whether she looked to any further probable consequences of her unhappy scheme, cannot be known; but the partner of MacTavish Mhor, in all his perils and wanderings, was familiar with a hundred instances of resistance or escape, by which one brave man, amidst a land of rocks, lakes, and mountains, dangerous passes, and dark forests, might baffle the pursuit of hundreds. For the future, therefore, she feared nothing; her sole engrossing object was to prevent her son from keeping his word with his commanding officer.

With this secret purpose, she evaded the proposal which Hamish repeatedly made, that they should set out together to take possession of her new abode; and she resisted it upon grounds apparently so natural to her character, that her son was neither alarmed nor displeased. "Let me not," she said, "in the same short week, bid farewell to my only son, and to the glen in which I have so long dwelt. Let my eye, when dimmed with weeping for thee, still look around, for a while at least, upon Loch Awe and on Ben Cruachan."

Hamish yielded the more willingly to his mother's humor in this particular, that one or two persons who resided in a neighboring glen, and had given their sons to Barcaldine's levy, were also to be provided for on the estate of the chieftain, and it was apparently settled that Elspat was to take her journey along with them when they should remove to their new residence. Thus, Hamish believed that he had at once indulged his mother's humor, and ensured her safety and accommodation. But she nourished in her mind very different thoughts and projects!

The period of Hamish's leave of absence was fast approaching, and more than once he proposed to depart, in such a time as to ensure his gaining easily and early Dumbarton, the town where were the head-quarters of his regiment. But still his mother's entreaties, his own natural disposition to linger among scenes long dear to him, and above all, his firm reliance in his speed and activity, induced him to protract his departure till the sixth day, being the very last which he could possibly afford to spend with his mother, if indeed he meant to comply with the conditions of his furlough.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

But, for your son,—believe it, oh, believe it—
Most dangerously you have with him prevailed,
If not most mortal to him.—

CORIOLANUS.

ON the evening which preceded his proposed departure, Hamish walked down to the river with his fishing-rod, to practice in the Awe, for the last time, a sport in which he excelled, and to find, at the same time, the means for making one social meal with his mother, on something better than their ordinary cheer. He was as successful as usual, and soon killed a fine salmon. On his return homeward, an incident befell him, which he afterward related as ominous, though probably his heated imagination, joined to the universal turn of his countrymen for the marvelous, exaggerated into superstitious importance some very ordinary and accidental circumstance.

In the path which he pursued homeward, he was surprised to observe a person, who, like himself, was dressed and armed after the old Highland fashion. The first idea that struck him was, that the passenger belonged to his own corps, who, levied by government, and bearing arms under royal authority, were not amenable for breach of the statutes against the use of the Highland garb or weapons. But he was struck on perceiving, as he mended his pace to make up to his supposed comrade, meaning to request his company for the next day's journey, that the stranger wore a white cockade, the fatal badge which was proscribed in the Highlands. The stature of the man was tall, and there was something shadowy in the outline, which, added to his size and his mode of motion, which rather resembled gliding than walking, impressed Hamish with superstitious fears concerning the character of the being which thus passed before him in the twilight. He no longer strove to make up to the stranger, but contented himself with keeping him in view, under the superstition, common to the Highlanders, that you ought neither to intrude yourself on such supernatural apparitions as you may witness, nor avoid their presence, but leave it to themselves to withhold or extend their communication, as their power may permit, or the purpose of their commission require.

Upon an elevated knoll by the side of the road, just where the pathway turned down to Elspat's hut, the stranger made a

pause, and seemed to await Hamish's coming up. Hamish, on his part, seeing it was necessary he should pass the object of his suspicion, mustered up his courage, and approached the spot where the stranger had placed himself; who first pointed to Elspat's hut, and made, with arm and head, a gesture prohibiting Hamish to approach it, then stretched his hand to the road which led to the southward, with a motion which seemed to enjoin his instant departure in that direction. In a moment afterward the plaided form was gone—Hamish did not exactly say vanished, because there were rocks and stunted trees enough to have concealed him; but it was his own opinion that he had seen the spirit of MacTavish Mhor, warning him to commence his instant journey to Dumbarton, without waiting till morning, or again visiting his mother's hut.

In fact, so many accidents might arise to delay his journey, especially where there were many ferries, that it became his settled purpose, though he could not depart without bidding his mother adieu, that he neither could nor would abide longer than for that object; and that the first glimpse of next day's sun should see him many miles advanced toward Dumbarton. He descended the path, therefore, and entering the cottage, he communicated, in a hasty and troubled voice, which indicated mental agitation, his determination to take his instant departure. Somewhat to his surprise Elspat appeared not to combat his purpose, but she urged him to take some refreshment ere he left her forever. He did so hastily, and in silence, thinking on the approaching separation, and scarce yet believing it would take place without a final struggle with his mother's fondness. To his surprise she filled the quaigh with liquor for his parting cup.

"Go," she said, "my son, since such is thy settled purpose; but first stand once more on thy mother's hearth, the flame on which will be extinguished long ere thy foot shall again be placed there."

"To your health, mother!" said Hamish, "and may we meet again in happiness, in spite of your ominous words."

"It were better not to part," said his mother, watching him as he quaffed the liquor, of which he would have held it ominous to have left a drop.

"And now," she said, muttering the words to herself, "go—if thou canst go."

"Mother," said Hamish, as he replaced on the table the empty quaigh, "thy drink is pleasant to the taste, but it takes away the strength which it ought to give."

"Such is its first effect, my son," replied Elspat; "but lie

down upon that soft heather couch, shut your eyes but for a moment, and, in the sleep of an hour, you shall have more refreshment than in the ordinary repose of three whole nights, could they be blended into one."

"Mother," said Hamish, upon whose brain the potion was now taking rapid effect, "give me my bonnet—I must kiss you and begone—yet it seems as if my feet were nailed to the floor."

"Indeed," said his mother, "you will be instantly well, if you will sit down for half-an-hour—but half-an-hour; it is eight hours to dawn, and dawn were time enough for your father's son to begin such a journey."

"I must obey, you mother—I feel I must," said Hamish inarticulately; "but call me when the moon rises."

He sat down on the bed—reclined back, and almost instantly was fast asleep. With the throbbing glee of one who has brought to an end a difficult and troublesome enterprise, Elspat proceeded tenderly to arrange the plaid of the unconscious slumberer, to whom her extravagant affection was doomed to be so fatal, expressing, while busied in her office, her delight, in tones of mingled tenderness and triumph. "Yes," she said, "calf of my heart, the moon shall arise and set to thee, and so shall the sun, but not to light thee from the land of thy fathers, or tempt thee to serve the foreign prince or the feudal enemy! To no son of Dermid shall I be delivered, to be fed like a bondswoman, but he who is my pleasure and my pride shall be my guard and my protector. They say the Highlands are changed; but I see Ben Cruachan rear his crest as high as ever into the evening sky—no one hath yet herded his kine on the depth of Loch Awe—and yonder oak does not yet bend like a willow. The children of the mountains will be such as their fathers, until the mountains themselves shall be leveled with the strath. In these wild forests, which used to support thousands of the brave there is still surely subsistence and refuge left for one aged woman, and one gallant youth, of the ancient race and the ancient manners."

While the misjudging mother thus exulted in the success of her stratagem, we may mention to the reader, that it was founded on the acquaintance with drugs and simples, which Elspat, accomplished in all things belonging to the wild life which she had led, possessed in an uncommon degree, and which she exercised for various purposes. With the herbs, which she knew how to select as well as how to distil, she could relieve more diseases than a regular medical person could easily believe. She applied some to dye the bright colors of the tartan

—from others she compounded draughts of various powers, and unhappily possessed the secret of one which was strongly soporific. Upon the effects of this last concoction, as the reader doubtless has anticipated, she reckoned with security on delaying Hamish beyond the period for which his return was appointed; and she trusted to his horror for the apprehended punishment to which he was thus rendered liable, to prevent him from returning at all.

Sound and deep, beyond natural rest, was the sleep of Hamish McTavish on that eventful evening, but not such the repose of his mother. Scarce did she close her eyes from time to time, but she awakened again with a start, in the terror that her son had arisen and departed; and it was only on approaching his couch, and hearing his deep-drawn and regular breathing, that she reassured herself of the security of the repose in which he was plunged.

Still, dawning, she feared, might awaken him, notwithstanding the unusual strength of the potion with which she had drugged his cup. If there remained a hope of mortal man accomplishing the journey, she was aware that Hamish would attempt it, though he were to die from fatigue upon the road. Animated by this new fear, she studied to exclude the light by stopping all the crannies and crevices through which, rather than through any regular entrance, the morning beams might find access to her miserable dwelling; and this in order to detain amid its wants and wretchedness the being, on whom, if the world itself had been at her disposal, she would have joyfully conferred it.

Her pains were bestowed unnecessarily. The sun rose high above the heavens, and not the fleetest stag in Breadalbane, were the hounds at his heels, could have sped to save his life, so fast as would have been necessary to keep Hamish's appointment. Her purpose was fully attained—her son's return within the period assigned was impossible. She deemed it equally impossible, that he would ever dream of returning, standing, as he must now do, in the danger of an infamous punishment. By degrees, and at different times, she had gained from him a full acquaintance with the predicament in which he would be placed by failing to appear on the day appointed, and the very small hope he could entertain of being treated with lenity. It is well-known that the great and wise Earl of Chatham prided himself on the scheme, by which he drew together, for the defence of the colonies, those hardy Highlanders, who, until his time, had been the objects of doubt, fear, and suspicion, on the part of each successive administration. But some obstacles

occurred, from the peculiar habits and temper of this people, to the execution of his patriotic project. By nature and habit, every Highlander was accustomed to the use of arms, but at the same time totally unaccustomed to, and impatient of, the restraints imposed by discipline upon regular troops. They were a species of militia, who had no conception of a camp as their only home. If a battle was lost, they dispersed to save themselves, and look out for the safety of their families; if won, they went back to their glens to hoard up their booty, and attend to their cattle and their farms. This privilege of going and coming at pleasure, they would not be deprived of even by their Chiefs, whose authority was in most other respects so despotic. It followed as a matter of course, that the new-levied Highland recruits could scarce be made to comprehend the nature of a military engagement, which compelled a man to serve in the army longer than he pleased; and perhaps, in many instances, sufficient care was not taken at enlisting to explain to them the permanency of the engagement which they came under, lest such a disclosure should induce them to change their mind. Desertions were therefore become numerous from the newly-raised regiment, and the veteran General who commanded at Dumbarton saw no better way of checking them than by causing an unusually severe example to be made of a deserter from an English corps. The young Highland regiment was obliged to attend upon the punishment, which struck a people peculiarly jealous of personal honor, with equal horror and disgust, and not unnaturally indisposed some of them to the service. The old General, however, who had been regularly bred in the German wars, stuck to his own opinion, and gave out in orders that the first Highlander who might either desert or fail to appear at the expiry of his furlough, should be brought to the halberds and punished like the culprit whom they had seen in that condition. No man doubted that General — would keep his word rigorously whenever severity was required, and Elspat, therefore, knew that her son, when he perceived that due compliance with his orders was impossible, must at the same time consider the degrading punishment denounced against his defection as inevitable, should he place himself within the General's power.*

When noon was well passed, new apprehensions came on the mind of the lonely woman. Her son still slept under the influence of the draught; but what if, being stronger than she had ever known it administered, his health or his reason should be

* Note F. Fidelity of the Highlanders.

affected by its potency! For the first time, likewise, notwithstanding her high ideas on the subject of paternal authority, she began to dread the resentment of her son, whom her heart told her she had wronged. Of late, she had observed that his temper was less docile, and his determinations, especially upon this late occasion of his enlistment, independently formed, and then boldly carried through. She remembered the stern wilfulness of his father when he accounted himself ill-used, and began to dread that Hamish, upon finding the deceit she had put upon him, might resent it even to the extent of casting her off, and pursuing his own course through the world alone. Such were the alarming and yet the reasonable apprehensions which began to crowd upon the unfortunate woman, after the apparent success of her ill-advised stratagem.

It was near evening when Hamish first awoke, and then he was far from being in the full possession either of his mental or bodily powers. From his vague expressions and disordered pulse, Elspat at first experienced much apprehension; but she used such expedients as her medical knowledge suggested; and in the course of the night, she had the satisfaction to see him sink once more into a deep sleep, which probably carried off the greater part of the effects of the drug, for about sunrising she heard him arise, and call to her for his bonnet. This she had purposely removed, from a fear that he might awaken and depart in the night-time, without her knowledge.

"My bonnet—my bonnet," cried Hamish, "it is time to take farewell. Mother, your drink was too strong—the sun is up—but with the next morning I will still see the double summit of the ancient Dun. My bonnet—my bonnet! mother, I must be instant in my departure." These expressions made it plain that poor Hamish was unconscious that two nights and a day had passed since he had drained the fatal quaigh, and Elspat had now to venture on what she felt as the almost perilous, as well as painful task, of explaining her machinations.

"Forgive me, my son," she said, approaching Hamish, and taking him by the hand with an air of deferential awe, which perhaps she had not always used to his father, even when in his moody fits.

"Forgive you, mother—for what?" said Hamish, laughing; "for giving me a dram that was too strong, and which my head still feels this morning, or for hiding my bonnet to keep me an instant longer? Nay, do *you* forgive me. Give me the bonnet, and let that be done which now must be done. Give me my bonnet, or I go without it; surely I am not to be delayed by so trifling a want as that—I, who have gone for years with only a

strap of deer's hide to tie back my hair. Trifle not, but give it me, or I must go bareheaded, since to stay is impossible."

"My son," said Elspat, keeping fast hold of his hand, "what is done cannot be recalled; could you borrow the wings of yonder eagle, you would arrive at the Dun too late for what you purpose,—too soon for what awaits you there. You believe you see the sun rising for the first time since you have seen him set, but yesterday beheld him climb Ben Cruachan, though your eyes were closed to his light."

Hamish cast upon his mother a wild glance of extreme terror, then, instantly recovering himself, said—"I am no child to be cheated out of my purpose by such tricks as these—Farewell, mother, each moment is worth a lifetime."

"Stay," she said, "my dear—my deceived son! rush not on infamy and ruin—Yonder I see the priest upon the highroad on his white horse—ask him the day of the month and week—let him decide between us."

With the speed of an eagle, Hamish darted up the acclivity and stood by the minister of Glenorquhy, who was pacing out thus early to administer consolation to a distressed family near Bunawe.

The good man was somewhat startled to behold an armed Highlander—then so unusual a sight, and apparently much agitated—stop his horse by the bridle, and ask him with a faltering voice the day of the week and month. "Had you been where you should have been yesterday, young man," replied the clergyman, "you would have known that it was God's Sabbath; and that this is Monday, the second day of the week, and twenty-first of the month."

"And is this true?" said Hamish.

"As true," answered the surprised minister, "as that I yesterday preached the word of God to this parish.—What ails you, young man?—are you sick?—are you in your right mind?"

Hamish made no answer, only repeated to himself the first expression of the clergyman—"Had you been where you should have been yesterday;" and so saying, he let go the bridle, turned from the road, and descended the path toward the hut, with the look and pace of one who was going to execution. The minister looked after him with surprise; but although he knew the inhabitant of the hovel, the character of Elspat had not invited him to open any communication with her, because she was generally reputed a Papist, or rather one indifferent to all religion, except some superstitious observances which had been handed down from her parents. On Hamish the Reverend Mr. Tyrie had bestowed instruc-

tions when he was occasionally thrown in his way, and if the seed fell among the brambles and thorns of a wild and uncultivated disposition, it had not yet been entirely checked or destroyed. There was something so ghastly in the present expression of the youth's features, that the good man was tempted to go down to the hovel, and inquire whether any distress had befallen the inhabitants, in which his presence might be consoling, and his ministry useful. Unhappily he did not persevere in this resolution, which might have saved a great misfortune, as he would have probably become a mediator for the unfortunate young man ; but a recollection of the wild moods of such Highlanders as had been educated after the old fashion of the country, prevented his interesting himself in the widow and son of the far-dreaded robber, MacTavish Mhor ; and he thus missed an opportunity, which he afterward sorely repented, of doing much good.

When Hamish MacTavish entered his mother's hut, it was only to throw himself on the bed he had left, and exclaiming, "Undone, undone ;" to give vent, in cries of grief and anger, to his deep sense of the deceit which had been practiced on him, and of the cruel predicament to which he was reduced.

Elspat was prepared for the first explosion of her son's passion, and said to herself, "It is but the mountain torrent, swelled by the thunder shower. Let us sit and rest us by the bank ; for all its present tumult, the time will soon come when we may pass it dryshod." She suffered his complaints and his reproaches, which were, even in the midst of his agony, respectful and affectionate, to die away without returning any answer ; and when, at length, having exhausted all the exclamations of sorrow which his language, copious in expressing the feelings of the heart, affords to the sufferer, he sunk into a gloomy silence, she suffered the interval to continue near an hour ere she approached her son's couch.

"And now," she said at length, with a voice in which the authority of the mother was qualified by her tenderness, "have you exhausted your idle sorrows, and are you able to place what you have gained against what you have lost ? Is the false son of Dermid your brother, or the father of your tribe, that you weep because you cannot bind yourself to his belt, and become one of those who must do his bidding ? Could you find in yonder distant country the lakes and the mountains that you leave behind you here ? Can you hunt the deer of Breadalbane in the forests of America, or will the ocean afford you the silver-scaled salmon of the Awe ? Consider then,

what is your loss, and, like a wise man, set it against what you have won."

"I have lost all, mother," replied Hamish, "since I have broken my word and lost my honor. I might tell my tale, but who, oh, who would believe me?" The unfortunate young man again clasped his hands together, and pressing them to his forehead, hid his face upon the bed.

Elspat was now really alarmed, and perhaps wished the fatal deceit had been left unattempted. She had no hope or refuge saving in the eloquence of persuasion, of which she possessed no small share, though her total ignorance of the world, as it actually existed, rendered its energy unavailing. She urged her son, by every tender epithet which a parent could bestow, to take care for his own safety.

"Leave me," she said, "to baffle your pursuers. I will save your life—I will save your honor—I will tell them that my fair-haired Hamish fell from the Corrie dhu (black precipice) into the gulf, of which human eye never beheld the bottom. I will tell them this, and I will fling your plaid on the thorns which grow on the brink of the precipice, that they may believe my words. They will believe, and they will return to the Dun of the double-crest; for though the Saxon drum can call the living to die, it cannot recall the dead to their slavish standard. Then will we travel together far northward to the salt lakes of Kintail, and place glens and mountains betwixt us and the sons of Dermid. We will visit the shores of the dark lake, and my kinsmen—for was not my mother of the children of Kenneth, and will they not remember us with the old love?—my kinsmen will receive us with the affection of the olden time, which lives in those distant glens, where the Gael still dwell in their nobleness, unmingled with the churl Saxons, or with the base brood that are their tools and their slaves."

The energy of the language, somewhat allied to hyperbole, even in its most ordinary expressions, now seemed almost too weak to afford Elspat the means of bringing out the splendid picture which she presented to her son of the land in which she proposed to him to take refuge. Yet the colors were few with which she could paint her Highland paradise. "The hills," she said, "were higher and more magnificent than those of Breadalbane—Ben Cruachan was but a dwarf to Skooroora. The lakes were broader and larger, and bounded not only with fish, but with the enchanted and amphibious animal which gives oil to the lamp.* The deer were larger and more numer-

* The seals are considered by the Highlanders as enchanted princes.

ous—the white-tusked boar, the chase of which the brave loved best, was yet to be roused in those western solitudes—the men were nobler, wiser, and stronger, than the degenerate brood who lived under the Saxon banner. The daughters of the land were beautiful, with blue eyes and fair hair, and bosoms of snow, and out of these she would choose a wife for Hamish, of blameless descent, spotless fame, fixed and true affection, who should be in their summer bothy as a beam of the sun, and in their winter abode as the warmth of the needful fire.

Such were the topics with which Elspat strove to soothe the despair of her son, and to determine him, if possible, to leave the fatal spot, on which he seemed resolved to linger. The style of her rhetoric was poetical, but in other respects resembled that which, like other fond mothers, she had lavished on Hamish, while a child or a boy, in order to gain his consent to do something he had no mind to ; and she spoke louder, quicker, and more earnestly, in proportion as she began to despair of her words carrying conviction.

On the mind of Hamish her eloquence made no impression. He knew far better than she did the actual situation of the country, and was sensible, that, though it might be possible to hide himself as a fugitive among more distant mountains, there was now no corner in the Highlands in which his father's profession could be practiced, even if he had not adopted, from the improved ideas of the time when he lived, the opinion, that the trade of the cateran was no longer the road to honor and distinction. Her words were therefore poured into regardless ears, and she exhausted herself in vain in the attempt to paint the regions of her mother's kinsmen in such terms as might tempt Hamish to accompany her thither. She spoke for hours, but she spoke in vain. She could extort no answer, save groans, and sighs, and ejaculations, expressing the extremity of despair.

At length, starting on her feet, and changing the monotonous tone in which she had chanted, as it were, the praises of the province of refuge, into the short, stern language of eager passion—"I am a fool," she said, "to spend my words upon an idle, poor-spirited, unintelligent boy, who crouches like a hound to the lash. Wait here, and receive your taskmasters, and abide your chastisement at their hands ; but do not think your mother's eyes will behold it. I could not see it and live. My eyes have looked often upon death, but never upon dishonor. Farewell, Hamish !—We never meet again."

She dashed from the hut like a lapwing, and perhaps for the moment actually entertained the purpose which she expressed of parting with her son forever. A fearful sight she would

have been that evening to any who might have met her wandering through the wilderness like a restless spirit, and speaking to herself in language which will endure no translation. She rambled for hours, seeking rather than shunning the most dangerous paths. The precarious track through the morass, the dizzy path along the edge of the precipice, or by the banks of the gulping river, were the roads which, far from avoiding, she sought with eagerness, and traversed with reckless haste. But the courage arising from despair was the means of saving the life, which (though deliberate suicide was rarely practiced in the Highlands) she was perhaps desirous of terminating. Her step on the verge of the precipice was firm as that of the wild goat. Her eye, in that state of excitation, was so keen as to discern, even amid darkness, the perils which noon would not have enabled a stranger to avoid.

Elspat's course was not directly forward, else she had soon been far from the bothy in which she had left her son. It was circuitous, for that hut was the centre to which her heartstrings were chained, and though she wandered around it, she felt it impossible to leave the vicinity. With the first beams of morning, she returned to the hut. A while she paused at the wattled door, as if ashamed that lingering fondness should have brought her back to the spot which she had left with the purpose of never returning; but there was yet more of fear and anxiety in her hesitation—of anxiety, lest her fair-haired son had suffered from the effects of her potion—of fear lest his enemies had come upon him in the night. She opened the door of the hut gently, and entered with noiseless step. Exhausted with his sorrow and anxiety, and not entirely relieved perhaps from the influence of the powerful opiate, Hamish Baen again slept the stern sound sleep, by which the Indians are said to be overcome during the interval of their torments. His mother was scarcely sure that she actually discerned his form on the bed, scarce certain that her ear caught the sound of his breathing. With a throbbing heart, Elspat went to the fireplace in the centre of the hut, where slumbered, covered with a piece of turf, the glimmering embers of the fire, never extinguished on a Scottish hearth until the indwellers leave the mansion forever.

“Feeble greishogh,”* she said, as she lighted, by the help of a match, a splinter of bog pine which was to serve the place of a candle; “weak greishogh, soon shalt thou be put out forever, and may Heaven grant that the life of Elspat MacTavish have no longer duration than thine!”

* Greishogh, a glowing ember.

While she spoke she raised the blazing light toward the bed, on which still lay the prostrate limbs of her son, in a posture that left it doubtful whether he slept or swooned. As she advanced toward him, the light flashed upon his eyes—he started up in an instant, made a stride forward with his naked dirk in his hand, like a man armed to meet a mortal enemy, and exclaimed, “Stand off!—on thy life, stand off!”

“It is the word and the action of my husband,” answered Elspat; “and I know by his speech and his step the son of MacTavish Mhor.”

“Mother,” said Hamish, relapsing from his tone of desperate firmness into one of melancholy expostulation; “oh, dearest mother, wherefore have you returned hither?”

“Ask why the hind comes back to the fawn,” said Elspat; “why the cat of the mountain returns to her lodge and her young. Know you, Hamish, that the heart of the mother only lives in the bosom of the child.”

“Then will it soon cease to throb,” said Hamish, “unless it can beat within a bosom that lies beneath the turf.—Mother, do not blame me; if I weep, it is not for myself, but for you, for my sufferings will soon be over; but yours——Oh, who but Heaven shall set a boundary to them!”

Elspat shuddered and stepped backward, but almost instantly resumed her firm and upright position, and her dauntless bearing.

“I thought thou wert a man but even now,” she said, “and thou art again a child. Harken to me yet, and let us leave this place together. Have I done thee wrong or injury? if so, yet do not avenge it so cruelly—See, Elspat MacTavish, who never kneeled before even to a priest, falls prostrate before her son, and craves his forgiveness.” And at once she threw herself on her knees before the young man, seized on his hand, and kissing it a hundred times, repeated as often, in heart-breaking accents, the most earnest entreaties for forgiveness. “Pardon,” she exclaimed, “pardon, for the sake of your father’s ashes—pardon, for the sake of the pain with which I bore thee, the care with which I nurtured thee!—Hear it, Heaven, and behold it, Earth—the mother asks pardon of her child, and she is refused!”

It was in vain that Hamish endeavored to stem this tide of passion, by assuring his mother, with the most solemn asseverations, that he forgave entirely the fatal deceit which she had practiced upon him.

“Empty words,” she said; “idle protestations, which are but used to hide the obduracy of your resentment. Would you

have me believe you, then leave the hut this instant, and retire from a country which every hour renders more dangerous—Do this, and I may think you have forgiven me—refuse it, and again I call on moon and stars, heaven and earth, to witness the unrelenting resentment with which you prosecute your mother for a fault, which, if it be one, arose out of love to you.”

“Mother,” said Hamish, “on this subject you move me not. I will fly before no man. If Barcaldine should send every Gael that is under his banner, here, and in this place, will I abide them; and when you bid me fly, you may as well command yonder mountain to be loosened from its foundations. Had I been sure of the road by which they are coming hither, I had spared them the pains of seeking me; but I might go by the mountain, while they perchance came by the lake. Here I will abide my fate; nor is there in Scotland a voice of power enough to bid me stir from hence, and be obeyed.”

“Here, then, I also stay,” said Elspat, rising up and speaking with assumed composure. “I have seen my husband’s death—my eyelids shall not grieve to look on the fall of my son. But MacTavish Mhor died as became the brave, with his good sword in his right hand; my son will perish like the bullock that is driven to the shambles by the Saxon owner, who has bought him for a price.”

“Mother,” said the unhappy young man, “you have taken my life; to that you have a right, for you gave it; but touch not my honor! It came to me from a brave train of ancestors and should be sullied neither by man’s deed nor woman’s speech. What I shall do, perhaps I myself yet know not; but tempt me no further by reproachful words; you have already made wounds more than you can ever heal.”

“It is well, my son,” said Elspat, in reply. “Expect neither further complaint nor remonstrance from me; but let us be silent, and wait the chance which Heaven shall send us.”

The sun arose on the next morning, and found the bothy silent as the grave. The mother and son had arisen, and were engaged each in their separate task—Hamish in preparing and cleaning his arms with the greatest accuracy, but with an air of deep dejection. Elspat, more restless in her agony of spirit, employed herself in making ready the food which the distress of yesterday had induced them both to dispense with for an unusual number of hours. She placed it on the board before her son so soon as it was prepared, with the words of a Gaelic poet, “Without daily food, the husbandman’s ploughshare stands still in the furrow; without daily food, the sword of the warrior is too heavy for his hand. Our bodies are our slaves, yet they

must be fed if we would have their service. So spake, in ancient days, the Blind Bard to the warriors of Fion."

The young man made no reply, but he fed on what was placed before him, as if to gather strength for the scene which he was to undergo. When his mother saw that he had eaten what sufficed him, she again filled the fatal quaigh, and proffered it as the conclusion of the repast. But he started aside with a convulsive gesture, expressive at once of fear and abhorrence.

"Nay, my son," she said; "this time, surely, thou hast no cause of fear."

"Urge me not, mother," answered Hamish; "or put the leprous toad into the flagon, and I will drink; but from that accursed cup, and of that mind destroying potion, never will I taste more!"

"At your pleasure, my son," said Elspat, haughtily; and began, with much apparent assiduity, the various domestic tasks which had been interrupted during the preceding day. Whatever was at her heart, all anxiety seemed banished from her looks and demeanor. It was but from an over-activity of bustling exertion that it might have been perceived, by a close observer, that her actions were spurred by some internal cause of painful excitement; and such a spectator, too, might also have observed how often she broke off the snatches of songs or tunes which she hummed, apparently without knowing what she was doing, in order to cast a hasty glance from the door of the hut. Whatever might be in the mind of Hamish, his demeanor was directly the reverse of that adopted by his mother. Having finished the task of cleaning and preparing his arms which he arranged within the hut, he sat himself down before the door of the bothy, and watched the opposite hill, like the fixed sentinel who expects the approach of an enemy. Noon found him in the same unchanged posture, and it was an hour after that period, when his mother, standing beside him, laid her hand on his shoulder, and said, in a tone indifferent, as if she had been talking of some friendly visit, "When dost thou expect them?"

"They cannot be here till the shadows fall long to the eastward," replied Hamish; "that is, even supposing the nearest party, commanded by Sergeant Allan Breack Cameron, has been commanded hither by express from Dumbarton, as it is most likely they will."

"Then enter beneath your mother's roof once more; partake the last time of the food which she has prepared; after this, let them come, and thou shalt see if thy mother is a useless en-

cumbrance in the day of strife. Thy hand, practiced as it is, cannot fire these arms so fast as I can load them ; nay, if it is necessary, I do not myself fear the flash or the report, and my aim has been held fatal."

"In the name of Heaven, mother, meddle not with this matter!" said Hamish. "Allan Breack is a wise man and a kind one, and comes of a good stem. It may be, he can promise for our officers, that they will touch me with no infamous punishment ; and if they offer me confinement in the dungeon, or death by the musket, to that I may not object."

"Alas ! and wilt thou trust to their word, my foolish child ? Remember the race of Dermid were ever fair and false, and no sooner shall they have gyves on thy hands, than they will strip thy shoulders for the scourge."

"Save your advice, mother," said Hamish sternly ; "for me, my mind is made up."

But though he spoke thus, to escape the almost persecuting urgency of his mother, Hamish would have found it, at that moment, impossible to say upon what course of conduct he had thus fixed. On one point alone he was determined, namely, to abide his destiny, be what it might, and not to add to the breach of his word, of which he had been involuntarily rendered guilty, by attempting to escape from punishment. This act of self-devotion he conceived to be due to his own honor and that of his countrymen. Which of his comrades would in future be trusted, if he should be considered as having broken his word, and betrayed the confidence of his officers ? and whom but Hamish Baen MacTavish would the Gael accuse, for having verified and confirmed the suspicions which the Saxon general was well known to entertain against the good faith of the Highlanders ? He was, therefore, bent firmly to abide his fate. But whether his intention was to yield himself peaceably into the hands of the party who should come to apprehend him, or whether he purposed, by a show of resistance, to provoke them to kill him on the spot, was a question which he could not himself have answered. His desire to see Barcaldine, and explain the cause of his absence at the appointed time, urged him to the one course ; his fear of the degrading punishment, and of his mother's bitter upbraidings, strongly instigated the latter and the more dangerous purpose. He left it to chance to decide when the crisis should arrive ; nor did he tarry long in expectation of the catastrophe.

Evening approached, the gigantic shadows of the mountains streamed in darkness toward the east, while their western peaks were still glowing with crimson and gold. The road which

winds round Ben Cruachan was fully visible from the door of the bothy, when a party of five Highland soldiers, whose arms glanced in the sun, wheeled suddenly into sight from the most distant extremity where the highway is hidden behind the mountain. One of the party walked a little before the other four, who marched regularly and in files, according to the rules of military discipline. There was no dispute, from the firelocks which they carried, and the plaids and bonnets which they wore, that they were a party of Hamish's regiment, under a non-commissioned officer ; and there could be as little doubt of the purpose of their appearance on the banks of Loch Awe.

"They come briskly forward," said the widow of MacTavish Mhor,—*"I wonder how fast or how slow some of them will return again! But they are five, and it is too much odds for a fair field. Step back, within the hut, my son, and shoot from the loophole beside the door. Two you may bring down ere they quit the high-road for the footpath—there will remain but three ; and your father, with my aid, has often stood against that number."*

Hamish Baen took the gun which his mother offered, but did not stir from the door of the hut. He was soon visible to the party on the high-road, as was evident from their increasing their pace to a run ; the files, however, still keeping together, like coupled greyhounds, and advancing with great rapidity. In far less time than would have been accomplished by men less accustomed to the mountains, they had left the high-road traversed the narrow path, and approached within pistol-shot of the bothy, at the door of which stood Hamish, fixed like a statue of stone, with his firelock in his hand, while his mother, placed behind him, and almost driven to frenzy by the violence of her passions, reproached him in the strongest terms which despair could invent, for his want of resolution and faintness of heart. Her words increased the bitter gall which was arising in the young man's own spirit, as he observed the unfriendly speed with which his late comrades were eagerly making toward him like hounds toward the stag when he is at bay. The untamed and angry passions which he inherited from father and mother, were awakened by the supposed hostility of those who pursued him ; and the restraint under which these passions had been hitherto held by his sober judgment, began gradually to give way. The sergeant now called to him, *"Hamish Baen MacTavish, lay down your arms, and surrender."*

"Do you stand, Allan Breack Cameron, and command your men to stand, or it will be the worse for us all."

"Halt men!"—said the sergeant, but continuing himself

to advance. "Hamish, think what you do, and give up your gun; you may spill blood, but you cannot escape punishment."

"The scourge—the scourge!—My son, beware of the scourge;" whispered his mother.

"Take heed, Allan Breack," said Hamish. "I would not hurt you willingly,—but I will not be taken unless you can assure me against the Saxon lash."

"Fool!" answered Cameron, "you know I cannot; yet I will do all I can. I will say I met you on your return, and the punishment will be light—But give up your musket—Come on, men."

Instantly he rushed forward, extending his arm as if to push aside the young man's leveled firelock. Elspat exclaimed, "Now, spare not your father's blood to defend your father's hearth!" Hamish fired his piece, and Cameron dropped dead.—All these things happened, it might be said, in the same moment of time. The soldiers rushed forward and seized Hamish, who, seeming petrified with what he had done, offered not the least resistance. Not so his mother; who, seeing the men about to put handcuffs on her son, threw herself on the soldiers with such fury, that it required two of them to hold her, while the rest secured the prisoner.

"Are you not an accursed creature," said one of the men to Hamish, "to have slain your best friend, who was contriving, during the whole march, how he could find some way of getting you off without punishment for your desertion?"

"Do you hear *that*, mother?" said Hamish, turning himself as much toward her as his bonds would permit—but the mother heard nothing, and saw nothing. She had fainted on the floor of her hut. Without waiting for her recovery, the party almost immediately began their homeward march toward Dunbarton, leading along with them their prisoner. They thought it necessary however, to stay for a little space at the village of Dalmally, from which they despatched a party of the inhabitants to bring away the body of their unfortunate leader, while they themselves repaired to a magistrate to state what had happened, and require his instructions as to the further course to be pursued. The crime being of a military character, they were instructed to march the prisoner to Dumbarton without delay.

The swoon of the mother of Hamish lasted for a length of time; the longer perhaps that her constitution, strong as it was, must have been much exhausted by her previous agitation of three days' endurance. She was roused from her stupor at

length by female voices, which cried the coronach, or lament for the dead, with clapping of hands and loud exclamations; while the melancholy note of a lament, appropriate to the clan Cameron, played on the bagpipe, was heard from time to time.

Elspat started up like one awakened from the dead, and without any accurate recollection of the scene which had passed before her eyes. There were females in the hut who were swathing the corpse in its bloody plaid before carrying it from the fatal spot. "Women," she said, starting up and interrupting their chant at once and their labor—"Tell me, women, why sing you the dirge of MacDhonuil Dhu in the house of MacTavish Mhor?"

"She-wolf, be silent with thine ill-omened yell," answered one of the females, a relation of the deceased, "and let us do our duty to our beloved kinsman! There shall never be coronach cried, or dirge played, for thee or thy bloody wolf-burd,* The ravens shall eat him from the gibbet, and the foxes and wild-cats shall tear thy corpse upon the hill. Cursed be he that would sain your bones, or add a stone to your cairn!"

"Daughter of a foolish mother," answered the widow of MacTavish Mhor, "know that the gibbet, with which you threaten us, is no portion of our inheritance. For thirty years the Black Tree of the Law, whose apples are dead men's bodies, hungered after the beloved husband of my heart; but he died like a brave man, with his sword in his hand, and defrauded it of its hopes and its fruit."

"So shall it not be with thy child, bloody sorceress," replied the female mourner, whose passions were as violent as those of Elspat herself. "The ravens shall tear his fair hair to line their nests, before the sun sinks beneath the Treshornish islands."

These words recalled to Elspat's mind the whole history of the last three dreadful days. At first, she stood fixed as if the extremity of distress had converted her into stone; but in a minute, the pride and violence of her temper, outbraved as she thought herself on her own threshold, enabled her to reply—"Yes, insulting hag, my fair-haired boy may die, but it will not be with a white hand—it has been dyed in the blood of his enemy, in the best blood of a Cameron—remember that; and when you lay your dead in his grave, let it be his best epitaph, that he was killed by Hamish Baen for essaying to lay hands on the son of MacTavish Mhor on his old threshold. Farewell—the shame of defeat, loss, and slaughter, remain with the clan that has endured it."

* Wolf-brood, *i.e.* wolf-cub.

The relative of the slaughtered Cameron raised her voice in reply ; but Elspat, disdaining to continue the oburgation, or perhaps feeling her grief likely to overmaster her power of expressing her resentment, had left the hut, and was walking forth in the bright moonshine.

The females who were arranging the corpse of the slaughtered man hurried from their melancholy labor to look after her tall figure as it glided away among the cliffs. " I am glad she is gone," said one of the younger persons who assisted. " I would as soon dress a corpse when the great Fiend himself—God sain us—stood visibly before us, as when Elspat of the Tree is amongst us.—Ay—ay, even overmuch intercourse hath she had with the Enemy in her day."

" Silly woman," answered the female who had maintained the dialogue with the departed Elspat, " thinkest thou that there is a worse fiend on earth, or beneath it, than the pride and fury of an offended woman, like yonder bloody-minded hag? Know that blood has been as familiar to her as the dew to the mountain daisy. Many and many a brave man has she caused to breathe their last for little wrong they had done to her or hers. But her hough-sinews are cut, now that her wolf-burd must, like a murderer as he is, make a murderer's end."

Whilst the women thus discoursed together, as they watched the corpse of Allan Breack Cameron, the unhappy cause of his death pursued her lonely way across the mountain. While she remained within sight of the bothy, she put a strong constraint on herself, that by no alteration of pace or gesture, she might afford to her enemies the triumph of calculating the excess of her mental agitation, nay, despair. She stalked, therefore, with a slow rather than a swift step, and, holding herself upright, seemed at once to endure with firmness that woe which was passed, and bid defiance to that which was about to come. But when she was beyond the sight of those who remained in the hut, she could no longer suppress the extremity of her agitation. Drawing her mantle wildly round her, she stopped at the first knoll, and climbing to its summit, extended her arms up to the bright moon, as if accusing heaven and earth for her misfortunes, and uttered scream on scream, like those of an eagle whose nest has been plundered of her brood. Awhile she vented her grief in these inarticulate cries, then rushed on her way with a hasty and unequal step, in the vain hope of overtaking the party which was conveying her son a prisoner to Dumbarton. But her strength, superhuman as it seemed, failed her in the trial, nor was it possible for her, with her utmost efforts, to accomplish her purpose.

Yet she pressed onward, with all the speed which her exhausted frame could exert. When food became indispensable, she entered the first cottage :—"Give me to eat," she said ; "I am the widow of MacTavish Mhor—I am the mother of Hamish MacTavish Baen,—give me to eat, that I may once more see my fair-haired son." Her demand was never refused, though granted in many cases with a kind of struggle between compassion and aversion in some of those to whom she applied which, was in others qualified by fear. The share she had had in occasioning the death of Allan Breack Cameron, which must probably involve that of her own son, was not accurately known ; but, from a knowledge of her violent passions and former habits of life, no one doubted that in one way or other she had been the cause of the catastrophe ; and Hamish Baen was considered, in the slaughter which he had committed, rather as the instrument than as the accomplice of his mother.

This general opinion of his countrymen was of little service to the unfortunate Hamish. As his captain, Green Colin, understood the manners and habits of his country, he had no difficulty in collecting from Hamish the particulars accompanying his supposed desertion, and the subsequent death of the non-commissioned officer. He felt the utmost compassion for a youth who had thus fallen a victim to the extravagant and fatal fondness of a parent. But he had no excuse to plead which could rescue his unhappy recruit from the doom, which military discipline and the award of a court-martial denounced against him for the crime he had committed.

No time had been lost in their proceedings, and as little was interposed betwixt sentence and execution. General —— had determined to make a severe example of the first deserter who should fall into his power, and here was one who had defended himself by main force, and had slain in the affray the officer sent to take him into custody. A fitter subject for punishment could not have occurred, and Hamish was sentenced to immediate execution. All which the interference of his captain in his favor could procure, was that he should die a soldier's death ; for there had been a purpose of executing him upon the gibbet.

The worthy clergyman of Glenorquhy chanced to be at Dumbarton, in attendance upon some church courts, at the time of this catastrophe. He visited his unfortunate parishioner in his dungeon, found him ignorant indeed, but not obstinate, and the answers which he received from him, when conversing on religious topics, were such as induced him doubly to regret

that a mind naturally pure and noble should have remained unhappily so wild and uncultivated.

When he ascertained the real character and disposition of the young man, the worthy pastor made deep and painful reflections on his own shyness and timidity, which, arising out of the evil fame that attached to the lineage of Hamish, had restrained him from charitably endeavoring to bring this strayed sheep within the great fold. While the good minister blamed his cowardice in times past, which had deterred him from risking his person, to save perhaps, an immortal soul, he resolved no longer to be governed by such timid counsels, but to endeavor, by application to his officers, to obtain a reprieve, at least, if not a pardon, for the criminal, in whom he felt so unusually interested, at once from his docility of temper and his generosity of disposition.

Accordingly, the divine sought out Captain Campbell at the barracks within the garrison. There was a gloomy melancholy on the brow of Green Colin, which was not lessened, but increased, when the clergyman stated his name, quality, and errand.

"You cannot tell me better of the young man than I am disposed to believe," answered the Highland officer; "you cannot ask me to do more in his behalf than I am of myself inclined, and have already endeavored to do. But it is all in vain. General—— is half a Lowlander, half an Englishman. He has no idea of the high and enthusiastic character which, in these mountains, often brings exalted virtues in contact with great crimes, which, however, are less offences of the heart than errors of the understanding. I have gone so far as to tell him, that, in this young man, he was putting to death the best and the bravest of my company, where all, or almost all, are good and brave. I explained to him by what strange delusion the culprit's apparent desertion was occasioned, and how little his heart was accessory to the crime which his hand unhappily committed. His answer was, 'These are Highland visions, Captain Campbell, as unsatisfactory and vain as those of the second sight. An act of gross desertion may, in any case, be palliated under the plea of intoxication; the murder of an officer may be as easily colored over with that of temporary insanity. The example must be made; and if it has fallen on a man otherwise a good recruit, it will have the greater effect.'—Such being the general's unalterable purpose," continued Captain Campbell, with a sigh, "be it your care, reverend sir, that your penitent prepare, by break of day to-morrow, for

that great change which we shall all one day be subjected to."

"And for which," said the clergyman, "may God prepare us all, as I in my duty will not be wanting to this poor youth."

Next morning as the very earliest beams of sunrise saluted the gray towers which crown the summit of that singular and tremendous rock, the soldiers of the new Highland regiment appeared on the parade, within the Castle of Dumbarton, and having fallen into order, began to move downward by steep staircases and narrow passages toward the external barrier-gate, which is at the very bottom of the rock. The wild wailings of the pibroch were heard at times, interchanged with the drums and fifes which beat the Dead March.

The unhappy criminal's fate did not, at first, excite that general sympathy in the regiment which would probably have arisen had he been executed for desertion alone. The slaughter of the unfortunate Allan Breack had given a different color to Hamish's offence; for the deceased was much beloved, and besides belonged to a numerous and powerful clan, of whom there were many in the ranks. The unfortunate criminal, on the contrary, was little known to, and scarcely connected with, any of his regimental companions. His father had been, indeed, distinguished for his strength and manhood, but he was of a broken clan, as those names were called who had no chief to lead them to battle.

It would almost have been impossible, in another case, to have turned out of the ranks of the regiment the party necessary for execution of the sentence; but the six individuals selected for that purpose were friends of the deceased, descended, like him, from the race of MacDhonnail Dhu; and while they prepared for the dismal task which their duty imposed, it was not without a stern feeling of gratified revenge. The leading company of the regiment began now to defile from the barrier-gate, and was followed by the others, each successively moving and halting according to the orders of the Adjutant, so as to form three sides of an oblong square, with the ranks faced inward. The fourth, or blank side of the square, was closed up by the huge and lofty precipice on which the Castle rises. About the centre of the procession, bare-headed, disarmed, and with his hands bound, came the unfortunate victim of military law. He was deadly pale, but his step was firm and his eye as bright as ever. The clergyman walked by his side—the coffin, which was to receive his mortal remains, was borne before him. The looks of his comrades were still, composed, and solemn. They felt for the youth, whose handsome form, and manly yet sub-

missive deportment, had, as soon as he was distinctly visible to them, softened the hearts of many, even of some who had been actuated by vindictive feelings.

The coffin destined for the yet living body of Hamish Baen was placed at the bottom of the hollow square, about two yards distant from the foot of the precipice, which rises in that place as steep as a stone wall to the height of three or four hundred feet. Thither the prisoner was also led, the clergyman still continuing by his side, pouring forth exhortations of courage and consolation, to which the youth appeared to listen with respectful devotion. With slow and, it seemed, almost unwilling steps, the firing party entered the square, and were drawn up facing the prisoner, about ten yards distant. The clergyman was now about to retire—"Think, my son," he said, "on what I have told you, and let your hope be rested on the anchor which I have given. You will then exchange a short and miserable existence here for a life in which you will experience neither sorrow nor pain.—Is there aught else which you can intrust to me to execute for you?"

The youth looked at his sleeve-buttons. They were of gold, booty perhaps which his father had taken from some English officer during the civil wars. The clergyman disengaged them from his sleeves.

"My mother!" he said with some effort, "give them to my poor mother!—See her, good father, and teach her what she should think of all this. Tell her Hamish Baen is more glad to die than ever he was to rest after the longest day's hunting. Farewell, sir—Farewell!"

The good man could scarce retire from the fatal spot. An officer afforded him the support of his arm. At his last look toward Hamish, he beheld him alive and kneeling on the coffin; the few that were around him had all withdrawn. The fatal word was given, the rock rung sharp to the sound of the discharge, and Hamish, falling forward with a groan, died, it may be supposed, without almost a sense of the passing agony.

Ten or twelve of his own company then came forward, and laid with solemn reverence the remains of their comrade in the coffin, while the dead march was again struck up, and the several companies, inarching in single files, passed the coffin one by one, in order that all might receive from the awful spectacle, the warning which it was peculiarly intended to afford. The regiment was then marched off the ground, and re-ascended the ancient cliff, their music, as usual on such occasions, striking lively strains, as if sorrow, or even deep thought, should as short a while as possible be the tenant of the soldier's bosom.

At the same time the small party, which we before mentioned, bore the bier of the ill-fated Hamish to his humble grave, in a corner of the churchyard of Dumbarton, usually assigned to criminals. Here, among the dust of the guilty, lies a youth, whose name, had he survived the ruin of the fatal events by which he was hurried into crime, might have adorned the annals of the brave.

The minister of Glenorquhy left Dumbarton immediately after he had witnessed the last scene of this melancholy catastrophe. His reason acquiesced in the justice of the sentence, which required blood for blood, and he acknowledged that the vindictive character of his countrymen required to be powerfully restrained by the strong curb of social law. But still he mourned over the individual victim. Who may arraign the bolt of Heaven when it bursts among the sons of the forest ; yet who can refrain from mourning, when it selects for the object of its blighting aim the fair stem of a young oak, that promised to be the pride of the dell in which it flourished ? Musing on these melancholy events, noon found him engaged in the mountain passes, by which he was to return to his still distant home.

Confident in his knowledge of the country, the clergyman had left the main road, to seek one of those shorter paths, which are only used by pedestrians, or by men, like the minister, mounted on the small, but sure-footed, hardy, and sagacious horses of the country. The place which he now traversed was in itself gloomy and desolate, and tradition had added to it the terror of superstition, by affirming it was haunted by an evil spirit, termed *Cloght-dearg*, that is, Redmantle, who at all times, but especially at noon and at midnight, traversed the glen, in enmity both to man and the inferior creation, did such evil as her power was permitted to extend to, and afflicted with ghastly terrors those whom she had not license otherwise to hurt.

The minister of Glenorquhy had set his face in opposition to many of these superstitions, which he justly thought were derived from the dark ages of Popery, perhaps even from those of Paganism, and unfit to be entertained or believed by the Christians of an enlightened age. Some of his more attached parishioners considered him as too rash in opposing the ancient faith of their fathers ; and though they honored the moral intrepidity of their pastor, they could not avoid entertaining and expressing fears that he would one day fall a victim to his temerity, and be torn to pieces in the glen of the *Cloght-dearg*, or some of those other haunted wilds, which he appeared rather

to have a pride and pleasure in traversing alone, on the days and hours when the wicked spirits were supposed to have especial power over man and beast.

These legends came across the mind of the clergyman ; and, solitary as he was, a melancholy smile shaded his cheek, as he thought of the inconsistency of human nature, and reflected how many brave men, whom the yell of the pibroch would have sent headlong against fixed bayonets, as the wild bull rushes on his enemy, might have yet feared to encounter those visionary terrors, which he himself, a man of peace, and in ordinary perils no way remarkable for the firmness of his nerves, was now risking without hesitation.

As he looked around the scene of desolation, he could not but acknowledge, in his own mind, that it was not ill chosen for the haunt of those spirits, which are said to delight in solitude and desolation. The glen was so steep and narrow, that there was but just room for the meridian sun to dart a few scattered rays upon the gloomy and precarious stream which stole through its recesses, for the most part in silence, but occasionally murmuring sullenly against the rocks and large stones, which seemed determined to bar its further progress. In winter, or in the rainy season, this small stream was a foaming torrent of the most formidable magnitude, and it was at such periods that it had torn open and laid bare the broad-faced and huge fragments of rock, which at the season of which we speak, hid its course from the eye, and seemed disposed totally to interrupt its course. "Undoubtedly," thought the clergyman, "this mountain rivulet, suddenly swelled by a water-spout, or thunder-storm, has often been the cause of those accidents, which happening in the glen called by her name, have been ascribed to the agency of the Cloght-dearg."

Just as this idea crossed his mind, he heard a female voice exclaim in a wild and thrilling accent, "Michael Tyrie—Michael Tyrie !" He looked round in astonishment, and not without some fear. It seemed for an instant, as if the Evil Being, whose existence he had disowned, was about to appear for the punishment of his incredulity. This alarm did not hold him more than an instant, not did it prevent his replying in a firm voice, "Who calls and where are you ?"

"One who journeys in wretchedness, between life and death," answered the voice ; and the speaker, a tall female, appeared from among the fragments of rocks which had concealed her from view.

As she approached more closely, her mantle of bright tartan, in which the red color much predominated, her stature, the

long stride with which she advanced, and the writhen features and wild eyes which were visible from under her curch, would have made her no inadequate representative of the spirit which gave name to the valley. But Mr. Tyrie instantly knew her as the Woman of the Tree, the widow of MacTavish Mhor, the now childless mother of Hamish Baen. I am not sure whether the minister would not have endured the visitation of the Cloght dearg herself, rather than the shock of Elspat's presence, considering her crime and her misery. He drew up his horse instinctively, and stood endeavoring to collect his ideas, while a few paces brought her up to his horse's head.

"Michael Tyrie," said she, "the foolish women of the Clachan* hold thee as a god—be one to me, and say that my son lives. Say this, and I too will be of thy worship—I will bend my knees on the seventh day in thy house of worship, and thy God shall be my God."

"Unhappy woman," replied the clergyman, "man forms not pactions with his Maker as with a creature of clay like himself. Thinkest thou to chaffer with Him, who formed the earth, and spread out the heavens, or that thou canst offer aught of homage or devotion that can be worth acceptance in his eyes? He hath asked obedience, not sacrifice, patience under the trials with which he afflicts us, instead of vain bribes, such as man offers to his changeful brother of clay, that he may be moved from his purpose."

"Be silent, priest!" answered the desperate woman; "speak not to me the words of thy white book. Elspat's kindred were of those who crossed themselves and knelt when the sacring bell was rung; and she knows that atonement can be made on the altar for deeds done in the field. Elspat had once flocks and herds, goats upon the cliffs, and cattle in the strath. She wore gold around her neck and on her hair—thick twists as those worn by the heroes of old. All these would she have resigned to the priest—all these; and if he wished for the ornaments of a gentle lady, or the sporran of a high chief, though they had been great as MacAllum More himself, MacTavish Mhor would have procured them if Elspat had promised them. Elspat is now poor, and has nothing to give. But the Black Abbot of Inchaffray would have bidden her scourge her shoulders, and macerate her feet by pilgrimage, and he would have granted his pardon to her when he saw that her blood had flowed, and that her flesh had been torn. These were the priests who had indeed power even with the most powerful—they threatened the great men of the earth with the

* *i.e.*, The village, literally the stones.

word of their mouth, the sentence of their book, the blaze of their torch, the sound of their sacring bell. The mighty bent to their will, unloosed at the word of the priests those whom they had bound in their wrath, and set at liberty, unharmed, him whom they had sentenced to death, and for whose blood they had thirsted. These were a powerful race, and might well ask the poor to kneel, since their power could humble the proud. But you!—against whom are ye strong, but against women who have been guilty of folly, and men who never wore a sword? The priests of old were like the winter torrent which fills this hollow valley, and rolls these massive rocks against each other as easily as the boy plays with the ball which he casts before him—But you! you do but resemble the summer-stricken stream, which is turned aside by the rushes, and stemmed by a bush of sedges—Woe worth you, for there is no help in you!”

The clergyman was at no loss to conceive that Elspat had lost the Roman Catholic faith without gaining any other, and that she still retained a vague and confused idea of the composition with the priesthood by confession, alms, and penance, and of their extensive power, which, according to her notion, was adequate, if duly propitiated, even to effecting her son's safety. Compassionating her situation, and allowing for her errors and ignorance, he answered her with mildness.

“Alas, unhappy woman! Would to God I could convince thee as easily where thou oughtest to seek, and art sure to find consolation, as I can assure you with a single word, that were Rome and all her priesthood once more in the plenitude of their power, they could not, for largesse or penance, afford to thy misery an atom of aid or comfort.—Elspat MacTavish, I grieve to tell you the news.”

“I know them without thy speech,” said the unhappy woman—“My son is doomed to die.”

“Elspat,” resumed the clergyman, “he *was* doomed, and the sentence has been executed.” The hapless mother threw her eyes up to heaven, and uttered a shriek so unlike the voice of a human being, that the eagle which soared in middle air answered it as she would have done the call of her mate.

“It is impossible!” she exclaimed, “it is impossible! Men do not condemn and kill on the same day! Thou art deceiving me.—The people call thee holy—hast thou the heart to tell a mother she has murdered her only child?”

“God knows,” said the priest, the tears falling fast from his eyes, “that, were it in my power, I would gladly tell better tidings—but these which I bear are as certain as they are fatal

—My own ears heard the death-shot, my own eyes beheld thy son's death—thy son's funeral.—My tongue bears witness to what my ears heard and my eyes saw.”

The wretched female clasped her hands close together, and held them up toward heaven like a sibyl announcing war and desolation ; while, in impotent yet frightful rage, she poured forth a tide of the deepest imprecations.—“ Base Saxon churl ! ’ she exclaimed, “ vile hypocritical juggler ! May the eyes that looked tamely on the death of my fair-haired boy be melted in their sockets with ceaseless tears, shed for those that are nearest and most dear to thee ! May the ears that heard his death-knell be dead hereafter to all other sounds save the screech of the raven, and the hissing of the adder ! May the tongue that tells me of his death, and of my own crime, be withered in thy mouth—or, better, when thou wouldst pray with thy people, may the Evil One guide it, and give voice to blasphemies instead of blessings, until men shall fly in terror from thy presence, and the thunder of heaven be launched against thy head, and stop forever thy cursing and accursed voice !—Begone with this malison ! Elspat will never, never again bestow so many words upon living man.”

She kept her word. From that day the world was to her a wilderness, in which she remained, without thought, care, or interest, absorbed in her own grief—indifferent to everything else.

With her mode of life, or rather of existence, the reader is already as far acquainted as I have the power of making him. Of her death, I can tell him nothing. It is supposed to have happened several years after she had attracted the attention of my excellent friend Mrs. Bethune Baliol. Her benevolence, which was never satisfied with dropping a sentimental tear when there was room for the operation of effective charity, induced her to make various attempts to alleviate the condition of this most wretched woman. But all her exertions could only render Elspat's means of subsistence less precarious—a circumstance which, though generally interesting even to the most wretched outcasts, seemed to her a matter of total indifference. Every attempt to place any person in her hut to take charge of her miscarried, through the extreme resentment with which she regarded all intrusion on her solitude, or by the timidity of those who had been pitched upon to be inmates with the terrible Woman of the Tree. At length, when Elspat became totally unable (in appearance at least) to turn herself on the wretched settle which served her for a couch, the humanity of Mr. Tyrie's successor sent two women to attend upon the last moments of

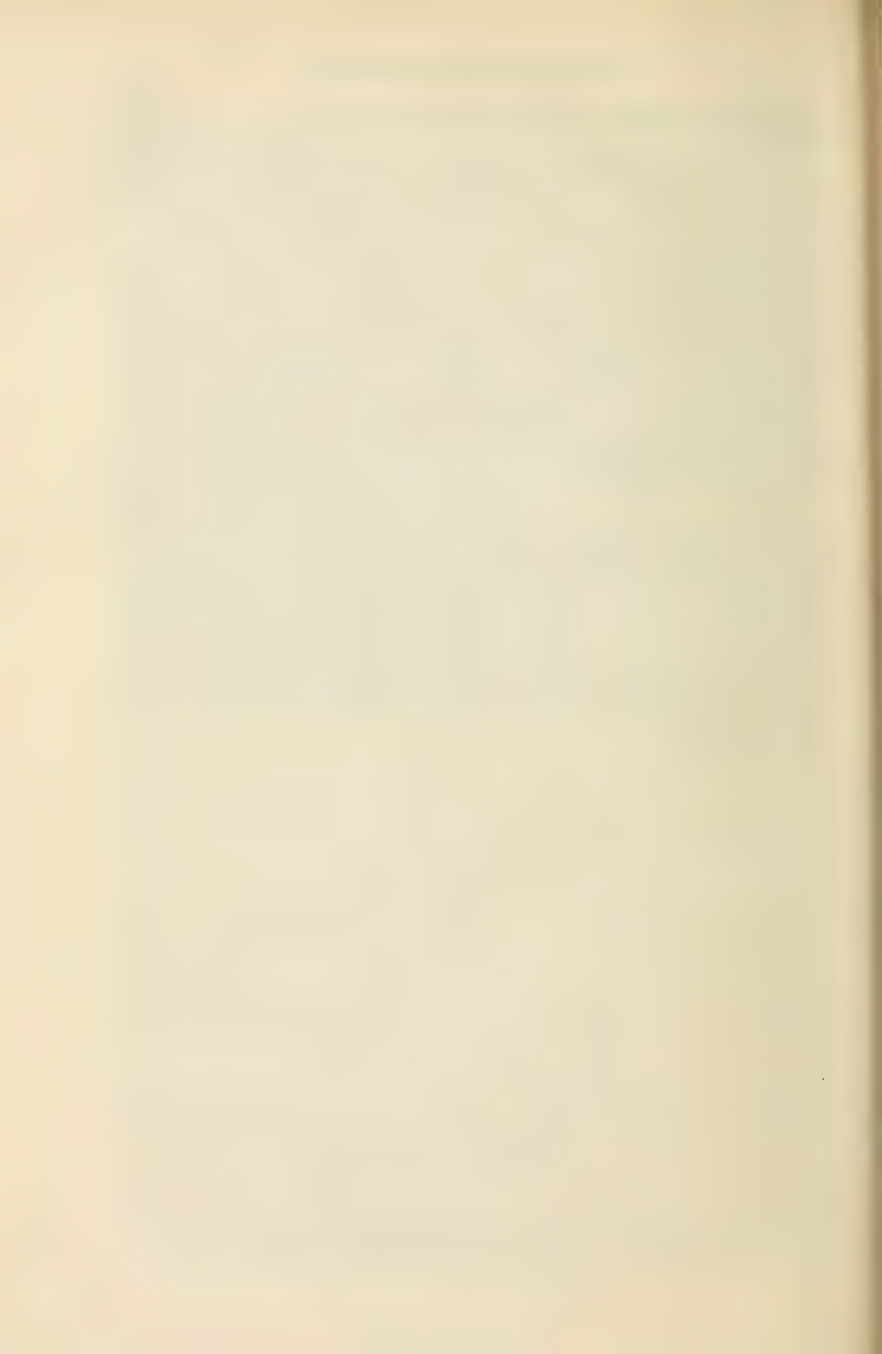
the solitary, which could not, it was judged, be far distant, and to avert the possibility that she might perish for want of assistance or food, before she sunk under the effects of extreme age, or mortal malady.

It was on a November evening, that the two women, appointed for this melancholy purpose, arrived at the miserable cottage which we have already described. Its wretched inmate lay stretched upon the bed, and seemed almost already a lifeless corpse, save for the wandering of the fierce dark eyes, which rolled in their sockets in a manner terrible to look upon, and seemed to watch, with surprise and indignation, the motions of the strangers, as persons whose presence was alike unexpected and unwelcome. They were frightened at her looks ; but, assured in each other's company, they kindled a fire, lighted a candle, prepared food, and made other arrangements for the discharge of the duty assigned them.

The assistants agreed they should watch the bedside of the sick person by turns ; but about midnight, overcome by fatigue (for they had walked far that morning), both of them fell fast asleep.—When they awoke, which was not till after the interval of some hours, the hut was empty, and the patient gone. They rose in terror, and went to the door of the cottage, which was latched as it had been at night. They looked out into the darkness, and called upon their charge by her name. The night-raven screamed from the old oak-tree ; the fox howled on the hill ; the hoarse waterfall replied with its echoes ; but there was no human answer. The terrified women did not dare to make further search till morning should appear ; for the sudden disappearance of a creature so frail as Elspat, together with the wild tenor of her history intimidated them from stirring from the hut. They remained, therefore, in dreadful terror, sometimes thinking they heard her voice without, and at other times, that sounds of a different description were mingled with the mournful sigh of the night breeze or the dash of the cascade. Sometimes, too, the latch rattled, as if some frail and impotent hand were in vain attempting to lift it, and ever and anon they expected the entrance of their terrible patient, animated by supernatural strength, and in the company, perhaps, of some being more dreadful than herself. Morning came at length. They sought brake, rock, and thicket, in vain. Two hours after daylight the minister himself appeared ; and, on the report the watchers, caused the country to be alarmed, and a general and exact search to be made through the whole neighborhood of the cottage, and the oak-tree. But it was all in vain. Elspat MacTavish was never found, whether dead or alive ; nor

could there ever be traced the slightest circumstance to indicate her fate.

The neighborhood was divided concerning the cause of her disappearance. The credulous thought that the Evil Spirit, under whose influence she seemed to have acted, had carried her away in the body; and there are many who are still unwilling, at untimely hours, to pass the oak-tree, beneath which, as they allege, she may still be seen seated according to her wont. Others less superstitious supposed that had it been possible to search the gulf of the Corrie Dhu, the profound depths of the lake, or the whelming eddies of the river, the remains of Elspat MacTavish might have been discovered; as nothing was more natural, considering her state of body and mind, than that she should have fallen in by accident, or precipitated herself intentionally into one or other of those places of sure destruction. The clergyman entertained an opinion of his own. He thought that, impatient of the watch which was placed over her, this unhappy woman's instinct had taught her, as it directs various domestic animals, to withdraw herself from the sight of her own race, that the death struggle might take place in some secret den, where, in all probability, her mortal relics would never meet the eyes of mortals. This species of instinctive feeling seemed to him of a tenor with the whole course of her unhappy life, and most likely to influence her, when it drew to a conclusion.



CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE.

SIC ITUR AD ASTRA.

MR. CROFTANGRY INTRODUCES ANOTHER TALE.

Together both on the high lawns appear'd,
Under the opening eyelids of the morn
They drove afield.

ELEGY ON LYCIDAS.

I HAVE sometimes wondered why all the favorite occupations and pastimes of mankind go to the disturbance of that happy state of tranquility, that *Otium*, as Horace terms it, which he says is the object of all men's prayers, whether preferred from sea or land; and that the undisturbed repose, of which we are so tenacious, when duty or necessity compels us to abandon it, is precisely what we long to exchange for a state of excitation, as soon as we may prolong it at our own pleasure. Briefly, you have only to say to a man, "remain at rest," and you instantly inspire the love of labor. The sportsman toils like his gamekeeper, the master of the pack takes as severe exercise as his whipper-in, the statesman or politician drudges more than the professional lawyer; and to come to my own case, the volunteer author subjects himself to the risk of painful criticism, and the assured certainty of mental and manual labor, just as completely as his needy brother, whose necessities compel him to assume the pen.

These reflections have been suggested by an annunciation on the part of Janet, "that the little Gillie-whitefoot was come from the printing-office."

"Gillie-blackfoot you should call him, Janet," was my response, "for he is neither more nor less than an imp of the devil, come to torment me for *copy*, for so the printers call a supply of manuscript for the press."

"Now, Cot forgie your honor," said Janet; "for it is no like your ainsell to give such names to a faitherless bairn."

"I have got nothing else to give him, Janet—he must wait a little."

"Then I have got some breakfast to give the bit gillie," said Janet; "and he can wait by the fireside in the kitchen, till your honor's ready; and cood enough for the like of him, if he was to wait your honor's pleasure all day."

"But, Janet," said I to my little active superintendent, on her return to the parlor, after having made her hospitable arrangements, "I begin to find this writing our Chronicles is rather more tiresome than I expected, for here comes this little fellow to ask for manuscript—that is, for something to print—and I have got none to give him."

"Your honor can be at nae loss; I have seen you write fast and fast enough; and for subjects, you have the whole Highlands to write about, and I am sure you know a hundred tales better than that about Hamish McTavish, for it was but about a young cateran and an auld carline, when all's done; and if they had burned the rudas quean for a witch, I am thinking, may be, they would not have tynd their coals—and her to gar her neer-do-weel son shoot a gentleman Cameron! I am third cousin to the Camerons mysell—my blood warms to them—And if you want to write about deserters, I am sure there were deserters enough on the top of Arthur's Seat, when the MacRaas broke out, and on that woeful day beside Leith Pier—Ohonaree!"——

Here Janet began to weep, and to wipe her eyes with her apron. For my part, the idea I wanted was supplied, but I hesitated to make use of it. Topics, like times, are apt to become common by frequent use. It is only an ass like Justice Shallow, who would pitch upon the over-scuted tunes, which the carmen whistled, and try to pass them off as his *fancies* and his *good-nights*. Now, the Highlands, though formerly a rich mine for original matter, are, as my friend Mrs. Bethune Baliol warned me, in some degree worn out by the incessant labor of modern romancers and novelists, who, finding in those remote regions primitive habits and manners, have vainly imagined that the public can never tire of them; and so kilted Highlanders are to be found as frequently, and nearly of as genuine descent, on the shelves of a circulating library, as at a Caledonian ball. Much might have been made at an earlier time out of the history of a Highland regiment, and the singular revolution of ideas which must have taken place in the minds of those who composed it, when exchanging their native hills for the battle-

fields of the Continent, and their simple, and sometimes indolent domestic habits, for the regular exertions demanded by modern discipline. But the market is forestalled. There is Mrs. Grant of Laggan, has drawn the manners, customs, and superstitions of the mountains in their natural unsophisticated state;* and my friend, General Stewart of Garth,† in giving the real history of the Highland regiments, has rendered any attempt to fill up the sketch with fancy-coloring extremely rash and precarious. Yet I, too, have still a lingering fancy to add a stone to the cairn; and without calling in imagination to aid the impressions of juvenile recollection, I may just attempt to embody one or two scenes illustrative of the Highland character, and which belong peculiarly to the Chronicles of the Canongate, to the gray-headed eld of whom they are as familiar as to Chrystal Croftangry. Yet I will not go back to the days of clanship and claymores. Have at you, gentle reader, with a tale of Two Drovers. An oyster may be crossed in love, says the gentle Tilburina—and a drover may be touched on a point of honor, says the Chronicler of the Canongate.

* *Letters from the Mountains*, 3 vols.—*Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders—The Highlanders*, and other Poems, etc.

† The gallant and amiable author of the *History of the Highland Regiments*, in whose glorious services his own share had been great, went out Governor of St. Lucia in 1828, and died in that island on the 18th of December, 1829—no man more regretted, or perhaps, by a wider circle of friends and acquaintance.

THE TWO DROVERS.

CHAPTER FIRST.

IT was the day after Doune Fair when my story commences. It had been a brisk market; several dealers had attended from the northern and midland counties in England, and English money had flown so merrily about as to gladden the hearts of the Highland farmers. Many large droves were about to set off for England, under the protection of their owners, or of the topsmen whom they employed in the tedious, laborious, and responsible office of driving the cattle for many hundred miles, from the market where they had been purchased, to the fields or farmyards where they were to be fattened for the shambles.

The Highlanders, in particular, are masters of this difficult trade of driving, which seems to suit them as well as the trade of war. It affords exercise for all their habits of patient endurance and active exertion. They are required to know perfectly the drove-roads, which lie over the wildest tracks of the country, and to avoid as much as possible the highways, which distress the feet of the bullocks, and the turnpikes, which annoy the spirit of the drover; whereas on the broad green or gray track, which leads across the pathless moor, the herd not only move at ease and without taxation, but, if they mind their business, may pick up a mouthful of food by the way. At night, the drovers usually sleep along with their cattle, let the weather be what it will; and many of these hardy men do not once rest under a roof during a journey on foot from Lochaber to Lincolnshire. They are paid very highly, for the trust reposed is of the last importance, as it depends on their prudence, vigilance, and honesty, whether the cattle reach the final market in good order, and afford a profit to the grazier. But as they maintain themselves at their own expense, they are especially economical in

that particular. At the period we speak of, a Highland drover was victualed for his long and toilsome journey with a few hand-fuls of oatmeal, and two or three onions, renewed from time to time, and a ram's horn filled with whisky, which he used regularly but sparingly, every night and morning. His dirk, or *skene-dhu* (*i.e.* black-knife), so worn as to be concealed beneath the arm, or by the folds of the plaid, was his only weapon, excepting the cudgel with which he directed the movements of the cattle. A Highlander was never so happy as on these occasions. There was a variety in the whole journey, which exercised the Celt's natural curiosity and love of motion; there were the constant change of place and scene, the petty adventures incidental to the traffic, and the intercourse with the various farmers, graziers, and traders, intermingled with occasional merry-makings, not the less acceptable to Donald that they were void of expense;—and there was the consciousness of superior skill; for the Highlander, a child amongst flocks, is a prince amongst herds, and his natural habits induce him to disdain the shepherd's slothful life, so that he feels himself nowhere more at home than when following a gallant drove of his country cattle in the character of their guardian.

Of the number who left Doune in the morning, and with the purpose we described, not a *Gluamie* of them all cocked his bonnet more briskly, or gartered his tartan hose under knee over a pair of more promising *spioys* (legs), than did Robin Oig M'Combich, called familiarly Robin Oig, that is, Young, or the Lesser, Robin. Though small of stature, as the epithet Oig implies, and not very strongly limbed, he was as light and alert as one of the deer of his mountains. He had an elasticity of step, which, in the course of a long march, made many a stout fellow envy him; and the manner in which he busked his plaid and adjusted his bonnet, argued a consciousness that so smart a John Highlandman as himself would not pass unnoticed among the Lowland lasses. The ruddy cheek, red lips, and white teeth, set off a countenance which had gained by exposure to the weather a healthful and hardy rather than a rugged hue. If Robin Oig did not laugh, or even smile frequently, as indeed is not the practice among his countrymen, his bright eyes usually gleamed from under his bonnet with an expression of cheerfulness ready to be turned into mirth.

The departure of Robin Oig was an incident in the little town, in and near which he had many friends, male and female.

He was a topping person in his way, transacted considerable business on his own behalf, and was intrusted by the best

farmers in the Highlands, in preference to any other drover in that district. He might have increased his business to any extent had he condescended to manage it by deputy; but except a lad or two, sister's sons of his own, Robin rejected the idea of assistance, conscious, perhaps, how much his reputation depended upon his attending in person to the practical discharge of his duty in every instance. He remained, therefore, contented with the highest premium given to persons of his description, and comforted himself with the hopes that a few journeys to England might enable him to conduct business on his own account, in a manner becoming his birth. For Robin Oig's father, Lachlan M'Combich (or *son of my friend*, his actual clan-surname being M'Gregor), had been so called by the celebrated Rob Roy, because of the particular friendship which had subsisted between the grandsire of Robin and that renowned cateran. Some people even say, that Robin Oig derived his Christian name from one as renowned in the wilds of Lochlomond as ever was his namesake Robin Hood in the precincts of merry Sherwood. "Of such ancestry," as James Boswell says, "who would not be proud?" Robin Oig was proud accordingly; but his frequent visits to England and to the Lowlands had given him tact enough to know that pretensions, which still gave him a little right to distinction in his own lonely glen, might be both obnoxious and ridiculous if preferred elsewhere. The pride of birth, therefore, was like the miser's treasure, the secret subject of his contemplation, but never exhibited to strangers as a subject of boasting.

Many were the words of gratulation and good luck which were bestowed on Robin Oig. The judges commended his drove, especially Robin's own property, which were the best of them. Some thrust out their snuff-mulls for the parting pinch—others tendered the *doch-an-dorrach*, or parting cup. All cried—"Good-luck travel out with you and come home with you.—Give you luck in the Saxon market—brave notes in the *ieal'har-dhu*" (black pocketbook), "and plenty of English gold in the *sporrán*" (pouch of goat-skin).

The bonny lasses made their adieus more modestly, and more than one, it was said, would have given her best brooch to be certain that it was upon her that his eye last rested as he turned toward the road.

Robin Oig had just given the preliminary "*Hoo-hoo!*" to urge forward the loiterers of the drove, when there was a cry behind him.

"Stay, Robin—bide a blink. Here is Janet of Tomahourich—auld Janet, your father's sister."

"Plague on her, for an auld Highland witch and spaewife," said a farmer from the carse of Stirling; "she'll cast some of her cantrips on the cattle."

"She canna do that," said another sapient of the same profession—"Robin Oig is no the lad to leave any of them, without tying Saint Mungo's knot on their tails, and that will put to her speed the best witch that ever flew over Dimayet upon a broomstick."

It may not be indifferent to the reader to know, that the Highland cattle are peculiarly liable to be *taken*, or infected, by spells and witchcraft; which judicious people guard against, by knitting knots of peculiar complexity on the tuft of hair which terminates the animal's tail.

But the old woman who was the object of the farmer's suspicion, seemed only busied about the drover, without paying any attention to the drove. Robin, on the contrary, appeared rather impatient of her presence.

"What auld-world fancy," he said, "has brought you so early from the ingle-side this morning, Muhme? I am sure I bid you good-even, and had your God-speed, last night."

"And left me more siller than the useless old woman will use till you come back again, bird of my bosom," said the sibyl. "But it is little I would care for the food that nourishes me, or the fire that warms me, or for God's blessed sun itself, if aught but weel should happen to the grandson of my father. So let me walk the *deasil* round you, that you may go safe out into the foreign land, and come safe home."

Robin Oig stopped, half embarrassed, half laughing, and signing to those near that he only complied with the old woman to soothe her humor. In the meantime, she traced around him, with wavering steps, the propitiation, which some have thought has been derived from the Druidical mythology. It consists, as is well known, in the person who makes the *deasil* walking three times round the person who is the object of the ceremony, taking care to move according to the course of the sun. At once, however, she stopped short, and exclaimed, in a voice of alarm and horror, "Grandson of my father, there is blood on your hand."

"Hush, for God's sake, aunt," said Robin Oig; "you will bring more trouble on yourself with this Taishataragh" (second sight) "than you will be able to get out of for many a day."

The old woman only repeated, with a ghastly look, "There is blood on your hand, and it is English blood. The blood of the Gael is richer and redder. Let us see—let us"—

Ere Robin Oig could prevent her, which, indeed, could only

have been done by positive violence, so hasty and peremptory were her proceedings, she had drawn from his side the dirk which lodged in the folds of his plaid, and held it up, exclaiming, although the weapon gleamed clear and bright in the sun, "Blood, blood—Saxon blood again. Robin Oig M'Combich, go not this day to England!"

"Prutt trutt," answered Robin Oig, "that will never do neither—it would be next thing to running the country. For shame, Muhme—give me the dirk. You cannot tell by the color the difference betwixt the blood of a black bullock and a white one, and you speak of knowing Saxon from Gaelic blood. All men have their blood from Adam, Muhme. Give me my skene-dhu, and let me go on my road. I should have been half-way to Stirling Brig by this time.—Give me my dirk, and let me go."

"Never will I give it to you," said the old woman—"Never will I quit my hold on your plaid, unless you promise me not to wear that unhappy weapon."

The women around him urged him also, saying few of his aunt's words fell to the ground; and as the Lowland farmers continued to look moodily on the scene, Robin Oig determined to close it at any sacrifice.

"Well, then," said the young drover, giving the scabbard of the weapon to Hugh Morrison, "you Lowlanders care nothing for these freats. Keep my dirk for me. I cannot give it to you, because it was my father's; but your drove follows *ours*, and I am content it should be in your keeping, not in mine.—Will this do, Muhme?"

"It must," said the old woman—"that is, if the Lowlander is mad enough to carry the knife."

The strong westlandman laughed aloud.

"Goodwife," said he, "I am Hugh Morrison from Glenae, come of the Manly Morrisons of auld langsyne, that never took short weapon against a man in their lives. And neither needed they. They had their broadswords, and I have this bit supple," showing a formidable cudgel—"for dirking ower the board, I leave that to John Highlandman—Ye needna snort, none of you Highlanders, and you in especial Robin. I'll keep the bit knife, if you are feared for the auld spaewife's tale, and give it back to you whenever you want it."

Robin was not particularly pleased with some part of Hugh Morrison's speech; but he had learned in his travels more patience than belonged to his Highland constitution originally, and he accepted the service of the descendant of the Manly

Morrisons without finding fault with the rather depreciating manner in which it was offered.

"If he had not had his morning in his head, and been but a Dumfriesshire hog into the boot, he would have spoken more like a gentleman. But you cannot have more of a sow than a grumph. It's shame my father's knife should ever slash a haggis for the like of him."

Thus saying (but saying it in Gaelic), Robin drove on his cattle, and waved farewell to all behind him. He was in the greater haste, because he expected to join at Falkirk a comrade and brother in profession, with whom he proposed to travel in company.

Robin Oig's chosen friend was a young Englishman, Harry Wakefield by name, well known at every northern market, and in his way as much famed and honored as our Highland driver of bullocks. He was nearly six feet high, gallantly formed to keep the rounds at Smithfield, or maintain the ring at a wrestling match; and although he might have been overmatched perhaps, among the regular professors of the Fancy, yet, as a yokel, or rustic, or a chance customer, he was able to give a bellyful to any amateur of the pugilistic art. Doncaster races saw him in his glory, betting his guinea, and generally successfully; nor was there a main fought in Yorkshire, the feeders being persons of celebrity, at which he was not to be seen, if business permitted. But though a *sprack* lad, and fond of pleasure and its haunts, Harry Wakefield was steady, and not the cautious Robin Oig M'Combich himself was more attentive to the main chance. His holidays were holidays indeed; but his days of work were dedicated to steady and persevering labor. In countenance and temper, Wakefield was the model of old England's merry yeomen, whose clothyard shafts, in so many hundred battles, asserted her superiority over the nations, and whose good sabres, in our own time, are her cheapest and most assured defence. His mirth was readily excited; for, strong in limb and constitution, and fortunate in circumstances, he was disposed to be pleased with everything about him; and such difficulties as he might occasionally encounter, were, to a man of his energy, rather matter of amusement than serious annoyance. With all the merits of a sanguine temper, our young English drover was not without his defects. He was irascible, sometimes to the verge of being quarrelsome; and perhaps not the less inclined to bring his disputes to a pugilistic decision, because he found few antagonists able to stand up to him in the boxing ring.

It is difficult to say how Harry Wakefield and Robin Oig first became intimates; but it is certain a close acquaintance

had taken place betwixt them, although they had apparently few common subjects of conversation or of interest, so soon as their talk ceased to be of bullocks. Robin Oig, indeed, spoke the English language rather imperfectly upon any other topics but stots and kyloes, and Harry Wakefield could never bring his broad Yorkshire tongue to utter a single word of Gaelic. It was in vain Robin spent a whole morning, during a walk over Minch Moor, in attempting to teach his companion to utter, with true precision, the shibboleth *Llu*, which is the Gaelic for a calf. From Traquair to Murder-cairn, the hill rang with the discordant attempts of the Saxon upon the unmanageable monosyllable, and the heartfelt laugh which followed every failure. They had, however, better modes of awakening the echoes; for Wakefield could sing many a ditty to the praise of Moll, Susan, and Cicely, and Robin Oig had a particular gift at whistling interminable pibrochs through all their involutions, and what was more agreeable to his companion's southern ear, knew many of the northern airs, both lively and pathetic, to which Wakefield learned to pipe a bass. Thus, though Robin could hardly have comprehended his companion's stories about horse-racing, and cock-fighting, or fox-hunting, and although his own legends of clan-fights and *creaghs*, varied with talk of Highland goblins and fairy folk, would have been caviare to his companion, they contrived nevertheless to find a degree of pleasure in each other's company, which had for three years back induced them to join company and travel together, when the direction of their journey permitted. Each, indeed, found his advantage in this companionship; for where could the Englishman have found a guide through the Western Highlands like Robin Oig M'Combich? and when they were on what Harry called the *right* side of the border, his patronage, which was extensive, and his purse, which was heavy, were at all times at the services of his Highland friend, and on many occasions his liberality did him genuine yeoman's service.

CHAPTER SECOND.

Were ever two such loving friends !—

How could they disagree ?

Oh, thus it was, he loved him dear,

And thought how to requite him,

And having no friend left but he,

He did resolve to fight him.

DUKE UPON DUKE.

THE pair of friends had traversed with their usual cordiality the grassy wilds of Liddesdale, and crossed the opposite part of Cumberland, emphatically called The Waste. In these solitary regions, the cattle under the charge of our drovers derived their subsistence chiefly by picking their food as they went along the drove road or sometimes by the tempting opportunity of a *start and overloup*, or invasion of the neighboring pasture, where an occasion presented itself. But now the scene changed before them ; they were descending toward a fertile and enclosed country, where no such liberties could be taken with impunity, or without a previous arrangement and bargain with the possessor of the ground. This was more especially the case, as a great northern fair was upon the eve of taking place, where both the Scotch and English drover expected to dispose of a part of their cattle, which it was desirable to produce in the market rested and in good order. Fields were therefore difficult to be obtained, and only upon high terms. This necessity occasioned a temporary separation betwixt the two friends, who went to bargain, each as he could, for the separate accommodation of his herd. Unhappily it chanced that both of them, unknown to each other, thought of bargaining for the ground they wanted on the property of a country gentleman of some fortune, whose estate lay in the neighborhood. The English drover applied to the bailiff on the property, who was known to him. It chanced that the Cumbrian Squire, who had entertained some suspicions of his manager's honesty, was taking occasional measures to ascertain how far they were well-founded, and had desired that any inquiries about his enclosures, with a view to occupy them for a temporary purpose, should be referred to himself. As, however, Mr. Ireby had gone the day before upon a journey of some miles distance to the northward, the bailiff chose to consider the check upon his full powers as for the time removed and concluded that he should best consult his master's interest,

and perhaps his own, in making an agreement with Harry Wakefield. Meanwhile, ignorant of what his comrade was doing, Robin Oig, on his side, chanced to be overtaken by a good-looking smart little man upon a pony, most knowingly hogged and cropped, as was then the fashion, the rider wearing tight leather breeches, and long-necked bright spurs. This cavalier asked one or two pertinent questions about markets and the price of stock. So Robin, seeing him a well-judging civil gentleman, took the freedom to ask him whether he could let him know if there was any grass land to be let in that neighborhood, for the temporary accommodation of his drove. He could not have put the question to more willing ears. The gentleman of the buckskin was the proprietor, with whose bailiff Harry Wakefield had dealt, or was in the act of dealing.

"Thou art in good luck, my canny Scot," said Mr. Ireby, "to have spoken to me, for I see thy cattle have done their day's work, and I have at my disposal the only field within three miles that is to be let in these parts."

"The drove can pe gang two, three, four miles very pratty weel indeed," said the cautious Highlander; "put what would his honor be axing for the peasts, pe the head, if she was to tak the park for twa or three days?"

"We won't differ, Sawney, if you let me have six stots for winterers, in the way of reason."

"And which peasts wad your honor pe for having?"

"Why—let me see—the two black—the dun one—yon doddy—him with the twisted horn—the brocket—How much by the head?"

"Ah," said Robin, "your honor is a shudge—a real shudge—I couldna have set off the pest six peasts petter mysell, me that ken them as if they were my pairns, puir things."

"Well, how much per head, Sawney?" continued Mr. Ireby.

"It was high markets at Doune and Falkirk," answered Robin.

And thus the conversation proceeded, until they had agreed on the *prix juste* for the bullocks, the Squire throwing in the temporary accommodation of the enclosure for the cattle into the boot, and Robin making, as he thought, a very good bargain, provided the grass was but tolerable. The squire walked his pony alongside of the drove, partly to show him the way, and see him put into possession of the field, and partly to learn the latest news of the northern markets.

They arrived at the field, and the pasture seemed excellent.

But what was their surprise when they saw the bailiff quietly inducting the cattle of Harry Wakefield into the grassy Goshen which had just been assigned to those of Robin Oig M'Combich by the proprietor himself! Squire Ireby set spurs to his horse, dashed up to his servant, and learning what had passed between the parties, briefly informed the English drover that his bailiff had let the ground without his authority, and that he might seek grass for his cattle wherever he would, since he was to get none there. At the same time he rebuked his servant severely for having transgressed his commands, and ordered him instantly to assist in ejecting the hungry and weary cattle of Harry Wakefield, which were just beginning to enjoy a meal of unusual plenty, and to introduce those of his comrade, whom the English drover now began to consider as a rival.

The feelings which arose in Wakefield's mind would have induced him to resist Mr. Ireby's decision; but every Englishman has a tolerably accurate sense of law and justice, and John Fleecebumpkin, the bailiff, having acknowledged that he had exceeded his commission, Wakefield saw nothing else for it than to collect his hungry and disappointed charge, and drive them on to seek quarters elsewhere. Robin Oig saw what had happened with regret, and hastened to offer to his English friend to share with him the disputed possession. But Wakefield's pride was severely hurt, and he answered disdainfully, "Take it all, man—take it all—never make two bites of a cherry—thou canst talk over the gentry, and blear a plain man's eye—Out upon you, man—I would not kiss any man's dirty latches for leave to bake in his oven."

Robin Oig, sorry but not surprised at his comrade's displeasure, hastened to entreat his friend to wait but an hour till he had gone to the Squire's house to receive payment for the cattle he had sold, and he would come back and help him to drive the cattle into some convenient place of rest, and explain to him the whole mistake they had both of them fallen into. But the Englishman continued indignant: "Thou hast been selling, hast thou? Ay, ay—thou is a cunning lad for kenning the hours of bargaining. Go to the devil with thyself, for I will ne'er see thy fause loon's visage again—thou should be ashamed to look me in the face."

"I am ashamed to look no man in the face," said Robin Oig, something moved; "and, moreover, I will look you in the face this blessed day, if you will bide at the clachan down yonder."

"Mayhap you had as well keep away," said his comrade; and, turning his back on his former friend, he collected his

unwilling associates, assisted by the bailiff, who took *some real* and some affected interest in seeing Wakefield accommodated.

After spending some time in negotiating with more than one of the neighboring farmers, who could not, or would not, afford the accommodation desired, Henry Wakefield at last, and in his necessity, accomplished his point by means of the landlord of the alehouse at which Robin Oig and he had agreed to pass the night, when they first separated from each other. Mine host was content to let him turn his cattle on a piece of barren moor, at a price little less than the bailiff had asked for the disputed enclosure ; and the wretchedness of the pasture, as well as the price paid for it, were set down as exaggerations of the breach of faith and friendship of his Scottish crony. This turn of Wakefield's passions was encouraged by the bailiff (who had his own reasons for being offended against poor Robin, as having been the unwitting cause of his falling into disgrace with his master), as well as by the innkeeper, and two or three chance guests, who stimulated the drover in his resentment against his quondam associate,—some from the ancient grudge against the Scots, which, when it exists anywhere, is to be found lurking in the Border counties, and some from the general love of mischief which characterizes mankind in all ranks of life, to the honor of Adam's children be it spoken. Good John Barleycorn also, who always heightens and exaggerates the prevailing passions, be they angry or kindly, was not wanting in his offices on this occasion ; and confusion to false friends and hard masters was pledged in more than one tankard.

In the meanwhile Mr. Ireby found some amusement in detaining the northern drover at his ancient hall. He caused a cold round of beef to be placed before the Scot in the butler's pantry, together with a foaming tankard of home-brewed, and took pleasure in seeing the hearty appetite with which these unwonted edibles were discussed by Robin Oig M'Combich. The squire himself lighting his pipe, compounded between his patrician dignity and his love of agricultural gossip, by walking up and down while he conversed with his guest.

"I passed another drove," said the Squire, "with one of your countrymen behind them—they were something less beasts than your drove, doddies most of them—a big man was with them—none of your kilts though, but a decent pair of breeches—D'ye know who he may be?"

"Hout ay—that might, could, and would be Hughie Morrison—I didna think he could hae been sae weel up. He has made a day on us ; but his Argyleshires will have wearied shanks. How far was he behind?"

"I think about six or seven miles," answered the Squire, "for I passed them at the Christenbury Crag, and I overtook you at the Hollan Bush. If his beasts be leg-weary, he will maybe be selling bargains."

"Na, na, Hughie Morrison is no the man for pargains—ye maun come to some Highland body like Robin Oig hersell for the like of these—put I maun pe wishing you goot night, and twenty of them let alane ane, and I maun down to the Clachan to see if the lad Harry Waakfelt is out of his humdudgeons yet."

The party at the alehouse were still in full talk, and the treachery of Robin Oig still the theme of conversation, when the supposed culprit entered the apartment. His arrival, as usually happens in such a case, put an instant stop to the discussion of which he had furnished the subject, and he was received by the company assembled with that chilling silence, which, more than a thousand exclamations, tells an intruder that he is unwelcome. Surprised and offended, but not appalled by the reception which he experienced, Robin entered with an undaunted and even a haughty air, attempted no greeting, as he saw he was received with none, and placed himself by the side of the fire, a little apart from a table at which Harry Wakefield, the bailiff, and two or three other persons, were seated. The ample Cumbrian kitchen would have afforded plenty of room even for a larger separation.

Robin, thus seated, proceeded to light his pipe, and call for a pint of twopenny.

"We have no twopence ale," answered Ralph Heskett, the landlord; "but as thou find'st thy own tobacco, it's like thou may'st find thy own liquor too—it's the wont of thy country, I wot."

"Shame, goodman," said the landlady, a blithe bustling housewife, hastening herself to supply the guest with liquor—"Thou knowest well enow what the strange man wants, and it's thy trade to be civil, man. Thou shouldst know, that if the Scot likes a small pot, he pays a sure penny."

Without taking any notice of this nuptial dialogue, the Highlander took the flagon in his hand, and addressing the company generally, drank the interesting toast of "Good Markets," to the party assembled.

"The better that the wind blew fewer dealers from the north," said one of the farmers, "and fewer Highland runts to eat up the English meadows."

"Saul of my pody, put you are wrang there, my friend," an-

swered Robin, with composure; it is your fat Englishmen that eat up our Scots cattle, puir things."

"I wish there was a summat to eat up their drovers," said another; "a plain Englishman canna make bread within a kenning of them."

"Or an honest servant keep his master's favor, but they will come sliding in between him and the sunshine," said the bailiff.

"If these pe jokes," said Robin Ogg, with the same composure, "there is ower mony jokes upon one man."

"It is no joke, but downright earnest," said the bailiff. "Harkye, Mr. Robin Ogg, or whatever is your name, it's right we should tell you that we are all of one opinion, and that is, that you, Mr. Robin Ogg, have behaved to our friend, Mr. Harry Wakefield here, like a raff and a blackguard."

"Nae doubt, nae doubt," answered Robin, with great composure; "and you are a set of very pretty judges, for whose prains or behavior I wad not gie a pinch of sneeshing. If Mr. Harry Waakfelt kens where he is wrangled, he kens where he may be righted."

"He speaks truth," said Wakefield, who had listened to what passed divided between the offence which he had taken at Robin's late behavior, and the revival of his habitual feelings of regard.

He now arose, and went toward Robin, who got up from his seat as he approached, and held out his hand.

"That's right, Harry—go it—serve him out," resounded on all sides—"tip him the nailer—show him the mill."

"Hold your peace all of you, and be——," said Wakefield; and then addressing his comrade, he took him by the extended hand, with something alike of respect and defiance, "Robin," he said, "thou hast used me ill enough this day; but if you mean, like a frank fellow, to shake hands, and make a tussle for love on the sod, why I'll forgie thee, man, and we shall be better friends than ever."

"And would it not pe petter to pe cood friends without more of the matter?" said Robin; "we will be much petter friendships with our panes hale than proken."

Harry Wakefield dropped the hand of his friend, or rather threw it from him.

"I did not think I had been keeping company for three years with a coward."

"Coward pelongs to none of my name," said Robin, whose eyes began to kindle, but keeping the command of his temper. "It was no coward's legs or hands, Harry Waakfelt, that

drew you out of the fords of Frew, when you was drifting ower the plack rock, and every eel in the river expected his share of you."

"And that is true enough, too," said the Englishman, struck by the appeal.

"Adzooks!" exclaimed the bailiff—"sure Harry Wakefield, the nattiest lad at Whitson Tryste, Wooler Fair, Carlisle Sands, or Stagshaw Bank, is not going to show white feather? Ah, this comes of living so long with kilts and bonnets—men forget the use of their daddles."

"I may teach you, Master Fleecebumpkin, that I have not lost the use of mine," said Wakefield, and then went on. "This will never do, Robin. We must have a turn-up, or we shall be the talk of the country-side. I'll be d—d if I hurt thee—I'll put on the gloves gin thou like. Come, stand forward like a man."

To pe peaten like a dog," said Robin; "is there any reason in that? if you think I have done you wrong I'll go before your shudge, though I neither know his law nor his language."

A general cry of "No, no—no law, no lawyer! a bellyful and be friends," was echoed by the bystanders.

"But," continued Robin, "if I am to fight, I've no skill to fight like a jackanapes, with hands and nails."

"How would you fight then?" said his antagonist; "though I am thinking it would be hard to bring you to the scratch any how."

"I would fight with broadswords, and sink point on the first blood drawn—like a gentlemen."

A loud shout of laughter followed the proposal, which indeed had rather escaped from poor Robin's swelling heart, than been the dictate of his sober judgment.

"Gentleman, quotha!" was echoed on all sides, with a shout of unextinguishable laughter; "a very pretty gentleman, God wot—Canst get two swords for the gentleman to fight with, Ralph Heskett?"

"No, but I can send to the armory at Carlisle, and lend them two forks, to be making shift with in the meantime."

"Tush, man," said another, "the bonny Scots come into the world with the blue bonnet on their heads, and dirk and pistol at their belt."

"Best send post," said Mr. Fleecebumpkin, "to the Squire of Corby Castle, to come and stand second to the *gentleman*."

In the midst of this torrent of general ridicule, the Highlander instinctively griped beneath the folds of his plaid.

"But it's better not," he said in his own language. "A

hundred curses on the swine-eaters, who know neither decency nor civility!"

"Make room, the pack of you," he said, advancing to the door.

But his former friend interposed his sturdy bulk, and opposed his leaving the house; and when Robin Oig attempted to make his way by force, he hit him down on the floor, with as much ease as a boy bowls down a nine-pin.

"A ring, a ring!" was now shouted until the dark rafters, and the hams that hung on them, trembled again, and the very platters on the *bink* clattered against each other. "Well done, Harry,"—"Give it him home, Harry,"—"take care of him now,—he sees his own blood!"

Such were the exclamations, while the Highlander, starting from the ground, all his coldness and caution lost in frantic rage, sprung at his antagonist with the fury, the activity, and the vindictive purpose, of an incensed tiger-cat. But when could rage encounter science and temper? Robin Oig again went down in the unequal contest; and as the blow was necessarily a severe one, he lay motionless on the floor of the kitchen. The landlady ran to offer some aid, but Mr. Fleecebumpkin would not permit her to approach.

"Let him alone," he said, "he will come to within time, and come up to the scratch again. He has not got half his broth yet."

"He has got all I mean to give him, though," said his antagonist, whose heart began to relent toward his old associate; "and I would rather by half give the rest to yourself, Mr. Fleecebumpkin, for you pretend to know a thing or two, and Robin had not art enough even to peel before setting to, but fought with his plaid dangling about him.—Stand up, Robin, my man! all friends now; and let me hear the man that will speak a word against you, or your country, for your sake."

Robin Oig was still under the dominion of his passion, and eager to renew the onset; but being withheld on the one side by the peace-making Dame Heskett, and on the other, aware that Wakefield no longer meant to renew the combat, his fury sunk into gloomy sullenness.

"Come, come, never grudge so much at it, man," said the brave-spirited Englishman, with the placability of his country; "shake hands, and we will be better friends than ever."

"Friends!" exclaimed Robin Oig, with strong emphasis—"friends!—Never. Look to yourself, Harry Waakfelt."

"Then the curse of Cromwell on your proud Scots stomach, as the man says in the play, and you may do your worst, and

be d—d ! for one man can say nothing more to another after a tussle, than that he is sorry for it.”

On these terms the friends parted ; Robin Oig drew out, in silence, a piece of money, threw it on the table, and then left the alehouse. But turning at the door, he shook his hand at Wakefield, pointing with his forefinger upward, in a manner which might imply either a threat or a caution. He then disappeared in the moonlight.

Some words passed after his departure, between the bailiff, who piqued himself on being a little of a bully, and Harry Wakefield, who, with generous inconsistency, was now not indisposed to begin a new combat in defence of Robin Oig’s reputation, “although he could not use his daddles like an Englishman, as it did not come natural to him.” But Dame Heskett prevented this second quarrel from coming to a head by her peremptory interference. “There should be no more fighting in her house,” she said ; “there had been too much already.—And you, Mr. Wakefield, may live to learn,” she added, “what it is to make a deadly enemy out of a good friend.”

“Pshaw, dame ! Robin Oig is an honest fellow, and will never keep malice.”

“Do not trust to that—you do not know the dour temper of the Scots, though you have dealt with them so often. I have a right to know them, my mother being a Scot.”

“And so is well seen on her daughter,” said Ralph Heskett.

This nuptial sarcasm gave the discourse another turn ; fresh customers entered the tap-room or kitchen, and others left it. The conversation turned on the expected markets, and the report of prices from different parts both of Scotland and England—treaties were commenced, and Harry Wakefield was lucky enough to find a chap for a part of his drove, and at a very considerable profit ; an event of consequence more than sufficient to blot out all remembrances of the unpleasant scuffle in the earlier part of the day. But there remained one party from whose mind that recollection could not have been wiped away by the possession of every head of cattle betwixt Esk and Eden.

This was Robin Oig M’Combich—“That I should have had no weapon,” he said, “and for the first time in my life !—Blighted be the tongue that bids the Highlander part with the dirk—the dirk—ha ! the English blood !—My Muhme’s word—when did her word fall to the ground ?”

The recollection of the fatal prophecy confirmed the deadly intention which instantly sprung up in his mind.

"Ha! Morrison cannot be many miles behind; and if it were a hundred, what then?"

His impetuous spirit had now a fixed purpose and motive of action, and he turned the light foot of his country toward the wilds, through which he knew, by Mr. Ireby's report, that Morrison was advancing. His mind was wholly engrossed by the sense of injury—injury sustained from a friend; and by the desire of vengeance on one whom he now accounted his most bitter enemy. The treasured ideas of self-importance and self-opinion—of ideal birth and quality, had become more precious to him, like the hoard to the miser, because he could only enjoy them in secret. But that hoard was pillaged, the idols which he had secretly worshipped had been desecrated and profaned. Insulted, abused, and beaten, he was no longer worthy, in his own opinion, of the name he bore, or the lineage which he belonged to—nothing was left to him—nothing but revenge; and, as the reflection added a galling spur to every step, he determined it should be as sudden and signal as the offence.

When Robin Oig left the door of the alehouse, seven or eight English miles at least lay betwixt Morrison and him. The advance of the former was slow, limited by the sluggish pace of his cattle; the last left behind him stubble-field and hedge-row, crag and dark heath, all glittering with frost-rime in the broad November moonlight, at the rate of six miles an hour. And now the distant lowing of Morrison's cattle is heard; and now they are seen creeping like moles in size and slowness of motion on the broad face of the moor; and now he meets them—passes them, and stops their conductor.

"May good betide us," said the Southlander—"Is this you, Robin M'Combich, or your wraith?"

"It is Robin Oig M'Combich," answered the Highlander, "and it is not.—But never mind that, put pe giving me the skene-dhu."

"What! you are for back to the Highlands—The devil!—Have you selt all off before the fair? This beats all for quick markets!"

"I have not sold—I am not going north—May pe I will never go north again.—Give me pack my dirk, Hugh Morrison, or there will pe words between us."

"Indeed, Robin, I'll be better advised before I gie it back to you—it is a wanchancy weapon in a Highlandman's hand, and I am thinking you will be about some barns-breaking."

"Prutt, trutt ! let me have my weapon," said Robin Oig, impatiently.

"Hooly and fairly," said his well-meaning friend. "I'll tell you what will do better then these dirking doings—Ye ken Highlander, and Lowlander, and Border-men, are a' ae man's bairns when you are over the Scots dyke. See, the Eskdale callants, and fighting Charlie of Liddesdale, and the Lockerby lads, and the four Dandies of Lustruther, and a wheen mair gray plaids, are coming up behind, and if you are wranged, there is the hand of a Manly Morrison, we'll see you righted, if Carlisle and Stanwix baith took up the feud."

"To tell you the truth," said Robin Oig, desirous of eluding the suspicions of his friend, "I have enlisted with a party of the Black Watch, and must march off to-morrow morning."

"Enlisted ! Were you mad or drunk ?—You must buy yourself off—I can lend you twenty notes, and twenty to that, if the drove sell."

"I thank you—thank ye, Hughie ; but I go with good will the gate that I am going,—so the dirk—the dirk !"

"There it is for you then, since less wunna serve. But think on what I was saying.—Waes me, it will be sair news in the Braes of Balquidder, that Robin Oig M'Combich should have run an ill gate, and ta'en on."

"Ill news in Balquidder, indeed !" echoed poor Robin. "But Cot speed you, Hughie, and send you good marcats. Ye winna meet with Robin Oig again, either at tryste or fair."

So saying, he shook hastily the hand of his acquaintance, and set out in the direction from which he had advanced, with the spirit of his former pace.

"There is something wrang with the lad," muttered the Morrison to himself ; "but we'll maybe see better into it the morn's morning."

But long ere the morning dawned, the catastrophe of our tale had taken place. It was two or three hours after the affray had happened, and it was totally forgotten by almost every one, when Robin Oig returned to Heskett's inn. The place was filled at once by various sorts of men, and with noises corresponding to their character. There were the grave low sounds of men engaged in busy traffic, with the laugh, the song, and the riotous jest of those who had nothing to do but to enjoy themselves. Among the last was Harry Wakefield, who, amidst a grinning group of smock-frocks, hobnailed shoes, and jolly English physiognomies, was trolling forth the old ditty,

"What though my name be Roger,
Who drives the plough and cart"—

when he was interrupted by a well-known voice saying in a high and stern tone, marked by the sharp Highland accent, "Harry Waakfelt—if you be a man, stand up!"

"What is the matter?—what is it?" the guests demanded of each other.

"It is only a d—d Scotsman," said Fleecebumpkin, who was by this time very drunk, "whom Harry Wakefield helped to his broth the day, who is now come to have *his could kail* het again."

"Harry Waakfelt," repeated the same ominous summons, "stand up, if you be a man!"

There is something in the tone of deep and concentrated passion, which attracts attention and imposes awe, even by the very sound. The guests shrunk back on every side, and gazed at the Highlander as he stood in the middle of them, his brows bent, and his features rigid with resolution.

"I will stand up with all my heart, Robin, my boy, but it shall be to shake hands with you, and drink down all unkindness. It is not the fault of your heart, man, that you don't know how to clench your hands."

By this time he stood opposite to his antagonist; his open and unsuspecting look strangely contrasted with the stern purpose, which gleamed wild, dark, and vindictive in the eyes of the Highlander.

"'Tis not thy fault, man, that, not having the luck to be an Englishman, thou canst not fight more than a school-girl."

"I *can* fight," answered Robin Oig sternly, but calmly, "and you shall know it. You, Harry Waakfelt, showed me to-day how the Saxon churls fight—I show you now how the Highland Dunniè-wassel fights."

He seconded the word with the action, and plunged the dagger, which he suddenly displayed, into the broad breast of the English yeoman, with such fatal certainty and force, that the hilt made a hollow sound against the breast-bone, and the double-edged point split the very heart of his victim. Harry Wakefield fell and expired with a single groan. His assassin next seized the bailiff by the collar, and offered the bloody poniard to his throat, whilst dread and surprise rendered the man incapable of defence.

"It were very just to lay you beside him," he said, "but the blood of a base pick-thank shall never mix on my father's dirk with that of a brave man."

As he spoke, he cast the man from him with so much force that he fell on the floor, while Robin, with his other hand, threw the fatal weapon into the blazing turf-fire.

"There," he said, "take me who likes—and let fire cleanse blood if it can."

The pause of astonishment still continuing, Robin Oig asked for a peace-officer; and a constable having stepped out, he surrendered himself to his custody.

"A bloody night's work you have made of it," said the constable.

"Your own fault," said the Highlander. "Had you kept his hands off me twa hours since he would have been now as well and merry as he was twa minutes since."

"It must be sorely answered," said the peace-officer.

"Never you mind that—death pays all debts; it will pay that too."

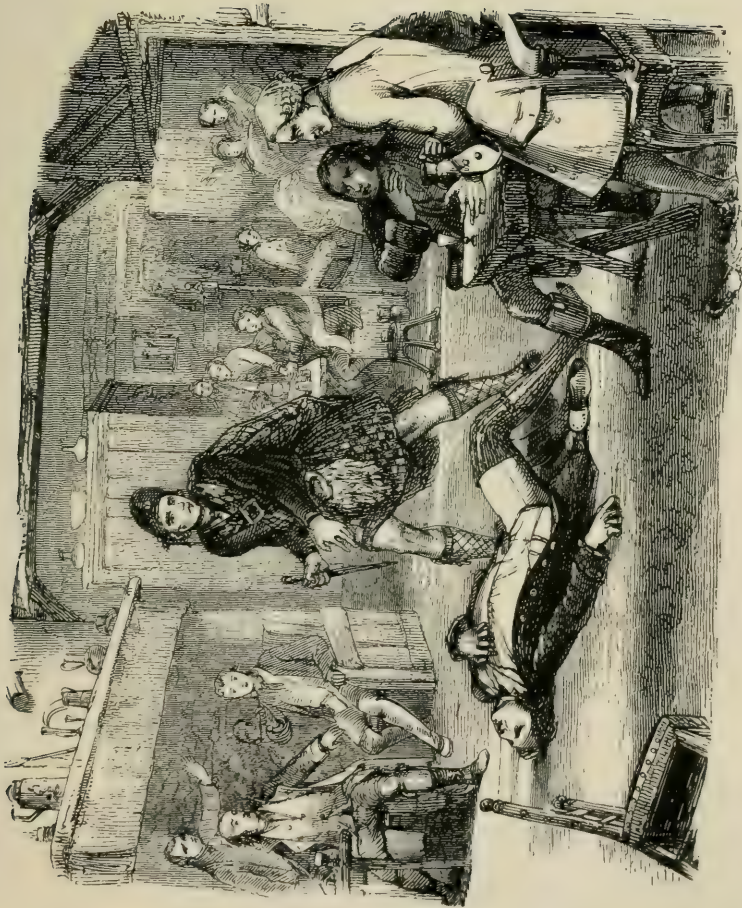
The horror of the bystanders began now to give way to indignation; and the sight of a favorite companion murdered in the midst of them, the provocation being, in their opinion, so utterly inadequate to the excess of vengeance, might have induced them to kill the perpetrator of the deed even upon the very spot. The constable, however, did his duty on this occasion, and, with the assistance of some of the more reasonable persons present, procured horses to guard the prisoner to Carlisle, to abide his doom at the next assizes. While the escort was preparing, the prisoner neither expressed the least interest nor attempted the slightest reply. Only before he was carried from the fatal apartment, he desired to look at the dead body, which, raised from the floor, had been deposited upon the large table (at the head of which Harry Wakefield had presided but a few minutes before, full of life, vigor, and animation) until the surgeons should examine the mortal wound. The face of the corpse was decently covered with a napkin. To the surprise and horror of the bystanders, which displayed itself in a general *Ah!* drawn through clenched teeth and half-shut lips, Robin Oig removed the cloth, and gazed with a mournful but steady eye on the lifeless visage, which had been so lately animated, that the smile of good-humored confidence in his own strength, of conciliation at once, and contempt toward his enemy, still curled his lip. While those present expected that the wound, which had so lately flooded the apartment with gore, would send forth fresh streams at the touch of the homicide, Robin Oig replaced the covering, with the brief exclamation—"He was a pretty man!"

My story is nearly ended. The unfortunate Highlander stood his trial at Carlisle. I was myself present, and as a young Scottish lawyer, or barrister at least, and reputed a man of some quality, the politeness of the Sheriff of Cumberland offered me a place on the bench. The facts of the case were proved in the

manner I have related them; and whatever might be at first the prejudice of the audience against a crime so un-English as that of assassination from revenge, yet when the rooted national prejudices of the prisoner had been explained, which made him consider himself as stained with indelible dishonor, when subjected to personal violence; when his previous patience, moderation, and endurance, were considered, the generosity of the English audience was inclined to regard his crime as the wayward aberration of a false idea of honor rather than as flowing from a heart naturally savage, or perverted by habitual vice. I shall never forget the charge of the venerable Judge to the jury, although not at that time liable to be much affected either by that which was eloquent or pathetic.

"We have had," he said, "in the previous part of our duty" (alluding to some former trials), "to discuss crimes which infer disgust and abhorrence, while they call down the well-merited vengeance of the law. It is now our still more melancholy task to apply its salutary though severe enactments to a case of a very singular character, in which the crime (for a crime it is, and a deep one) arose less out of the malevolence of the heart, than the error of the understanding—less from any idea of committing wrong, than from an unhappily perverted notion of that which is right. Here we have two men, highly esteemed, it has been stated, in their rank of life, and attached, it seems, to each other as friends, one of whose lives has been already sacrificed to a punctilio, and the other is about to prove the vengeance of the offended laws; and yet both may claim our commiseration at least, as men acting in ignorance of each other's national prejudices, and unhappily misguided rather than voluntarily erring from the path of right conduct.

"In the original cause of the misunderstanding, we must in justice give the right to the prisoner at the bar. He had acquired possession of the enclosure, which was the object of competition, by a legal contract with the proprietor, Mr. Ireby; and yet, when accosted with reproaches undeserved in themselves, and galling doubtless to a temper at least sufficiently susceptible of passion, he offered notwithstanding to yield up half his acquisition, for the sake of peace and good neighborhood, and his amicable proposal was rejected with scorn. Then follows the scene at Mr. Heskett the publican's, and you will observe how the stranger was treated by the deceased, and, I am sorry to observe, by those around, who seemed to have urged him in a manner which was aggravating in the highest degree. While he asked for peace and for composition, and offered submission to a magistrate, or to a mutual arbiter, the prisoner



DEATH OF HARRY WAKEFIELD.

was insulted by a whole company, who seem on this occasion to have forgotten the national maxim of 'fair play'; and while attempting to escape from the place in peace, he was intercepted, struck down, and beaten to the effusion of his blood.

"Gentlemen of the Jury, it was with some impatience that I heard my learned brother, who opened the case for the crown, give an unfavorable turn to the prisoner's conduct on this occasion. He said the prisoner was afraid to encounter his antagonist in fair fight, or to submit to the laws of the ring; and that, therefore, like a cowardly Italian, he had recourse to his fatal stiletto, to murder the man whom he dared not meet in manly encounter. I observed the prisoner shrink from this part of the accusation with the abhorrence natural to a brave man; and as I would wish to make my words impressive, when I point his real crime, I must secure his opinion of my impartiality, by rebutting everything that seems to me a false accusation. There can be no doubt that the prisoner is a man of resolution—too much resolution—I wish to Heaven that he had less, or rather that he had had a better education to regulate it.

"Gentlemen, as to the laws my brother talks of, they may be known in the Bull-ring, or the Bear-garden, or the Cockpit, but they are not known here. Or, if they should be so far admitted as furnishing a species of proof that no malice was intended in this sort of combat, from which fatal accidents do sometimes arise, it can only be so admitted when both parties are *in pari casu*, equally acquainted with, and equally willing to refer themselves to, that species of arbitrament. But will it be contended that a man of superior rank and education is to be subjected, or is obliged to subject himself, to this coarse and brutal strife, perhaps in opposition to a younger, stronger, or more skilful opponent. Certainly even the pugilistic code, if founded upon the fair play of Merry Old England, as my brother alleges it to be, can contain nothing so preposterous. And, gentlemen of the jury, if the laws would support an English gentleman, wearing, we will suppose, his sword, in defending himself by force against a violent personal aggression of the nature offered to this prisoner, they will not less protect a foreigner and a stranger, involved in the same unpleasant circumstances. If, therefore, gentlemen of the jury, when thus pressed by a *vis major*, the object of obloquy to a whole company, and of direct violence from one at least, and, as he might reasonably apprehend, from more, the panel had produced the weapon which his countrymen, as we are informed,

generally carry about their persons, and the same unhappy circumstance had ensued which you have heard detailed in evidence, I could not in my conscience have asked from you a verdict of murder. The prisoner's personal defence might, indeed, even in that case, have gone more or less beyond the *Moderamen inculpatae tutelæ*, spoken of by lawyers, but the punishment incurred would have been that of manslaughter, not of murder. I beg leave to add, that I should have thought this milder species of charge was demanded in the case supposed, notwithstanding the statute of James I. cap. 8, which takes the case of slaughter by stabbing with a short weapon, even without malice prepense, out of the benefit of clergy. For this statute of stabbing, as it is termed, arose out of a temporary cause; and as the real guilt is the same, whether the slaughter be committed by the dagger, or by sword or pistol, the benignity of the modern law places them all on the same, or nearly the same footing.

"But, gentlemen of the jury, the pinch of the case lies in the interval of two hours interposed betwixt the reception of the injury and the fatal retaliation. In the heat of affray and *chaude mêlée*, law, compassionating the infirmities of humanity, makes allowance for the passions which rule such a stormy moment—for the sense of present pain, for the apprehension of further injury, for the difficulty of ascertaining with due accuracy the precise degree of violence which is necessary to protect the person of the individual, without annoying or injuring the assailant more than is absolutely requisite. But the time necessary to walk twelve miles, however speedily performed, was an interval sufficient for the prisoner to have recollected himself; and the violence with which he carried his purpose into effect, with so many circumstances of deliberate determination, could neither be induced by the passion of anger, nor that of fear. It was the purpose and the act of predetermined revenge, for which law neither can, will, nor ought, to have sympathy or allowance.

"It is true, we may repeat to ourselves, in alleviation of this poor man's unhappy action, that his case is a very peculiar one. The country which he inhabits, was in the days of many now alive, inaccessible to the laws, not only of England, which have not even yet penetrated thither, but to those to which our neighbors of Scotland are subjected, and which must be supposed to be, and no doubt actually are, founded upon the general principles of justice and equity which pervade every civilized country. Amongst their mountains, as among the

North American Indians, the various tribes were wont to make war upon each other, so that each man was obliged to go armed for his own protection. These men, from the ideas which they entertained of their own descent and of their own consequence, regarded themselves as so many cavaliers or men-at-arms, rather than as the peasantry of a peaceful country. Those laws of the ring, as my brother terms them, were unknown to the race of warlike mountaineers; that decision of quarrels by no other weapons than those which nature has given every man, must to them have seemed as vulgar and as preposterous as to the Noblesse of France. Revenge, on the other hand, must have been as familiar to their habits of society as to those of the Cherokees or Mohawks. It is indeed, as described by Bacon, at bottom, a kind of wild untutored justice; for the fear of retaliation must withhold the hands of the oppressor where there is no regular law to check daring violence. But though all this may be granted, and though we may allow that, such having been the case of the Highlands in the days of the prisoner's fathers, many of the opinions and sentiments must still continue to influence the present generation, it cannot, and ought not, even in this most painful case, to alter the administration of the law, either in your hands, gentlemen of the jury, or in mine. The first object of civilization is to place the general protection of the law, equally administered, in the room of that wild justice, which every man cut and carved for himself, according to the length of his sword and the strength of his arm. The law says to the subjects, with a voice only inferior to that of the Deity, 'Vengeance is mine.' The instant that there is time for passion to cool, and reason to interpose, an injured party must become aware, that the law assumes the exclusive cognizance of the right and wrong betwixt the parties, and opposes her inviolable buckler to every attempt of the private party to right himself. I repeat, that this unhappy man ought personally to be the object rather of our pity than our abhorrence, for he failed in his ignorance, and from mistaken notions of honor. But his crime is not the less that of murder, gentlemen, and in your high and important office, it is your duty so to find. Englishmen have their angry passions as well as Scots; and should this man's action remain unpunished, you may unsheath, under various pretences, a thousand daggers betwixt the Land's-end and the Orkneys."

The venerable Judge thus ended what, to judge by his apparent emotion, and by the tears which filled his eyes, was really a painful task. The jury, according to his instructions,

brought in a verdict of Guilty ; and Robin Oig M'Combich, *alias* M'Gregor, was sentenced to death, and left for execution, which took place accordingly. He met his fate with great firmness, and acknowledged the justice of his sentence. But he repelled indignantly the observations of those who accused him of attacking an unarmed man. "I give a life for the life I took," he said, "and what can I do more ?" *

* Note. Robert Donn's poems.

NOTES TO CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE.

NOTE A, p. 2.—SANCTUARY OF HOLYROOD

The reader may be gratified with Hector Boece's narrative of the original foundation of the famous Abbey of Holyrood, or the Holy Cross, as given in Bellenden's translation:—

"Eftir death of Alexander the first, his brothir David come out of Ingland, and wes crownit at Scone, the yeir of God M^{CXXIV} yeiris, and did gret justice eftir his corination, in all partis of his realme. He had na weris during the time of King Hary; and wes so pietuous, that he sat daylie in judgment, to caus his pure commonis to have justice; and causit the actionis of his noblis to be decidit be his othir jugis. He gart ilk juge redres the skaithis that come to the party be his wrang sentence; throw quhilk he decorit his realm with mony nobil actis, and ejeckit the vennomus custome of riotus cheir, quhilk wes inducit afore be Inglismen, quhen they com with Quene Margaret; for the samin was noisum to al gud maneris, makand his pepil tender and effeminat.

"In the fourt yeir of his regne, this nobill prince come to visie the madin Castell of Edinburgh. At this time, all the boundis of Scotland were ful of woddis, lesouris, and medois; for the countre wes more gevin to store of bestiall than ony production of cornis; and about this castell was ane gret forest, full of haris, hindis, toddis, and sicklike maner of beistis. Now was the Rude Day cumin, called the Exaltation of the Croce; and, becaus the samin was ane hie solempne day, the king past to his contemplation. Eftir the messis wer done with maist solempnitie and reverence, comperit afore him mony young and insolen baronis of Scotland, richt desirus to haif some plesur and solace, be chace of hundis in the said forest. At this time wes with the king ane man of singulare and devoit life, namit Alkwine, channon eftir the ordour of Sanct Augustine, quhilk wes lang time confes-soure, afore, to King David in Ingland, the time that he was Erle of Huntingtoun and Northumbirland. This religious man dissuadit the King, be mony reasonis, to pas to this huntis; and allegit the day was so solempne, be reverence of the haly croce, that he suld gif him erar, for that day, to contemplation, than ony othir exersition. Nochtheles, his dissuasion is littill avalit; for the king wes finallie so provokit, be importune sollicitioun of his baronis, that he past, nochtwithstanding the solempnite of this day, to his hountis. At last, quhen he was cumin throw the vail that lyes to the gret eist fra the said castell, quhare now lyes the Canongait, the staik past throw the wod with sic noyis and din of rachis and bugillis, that all the bestis were rasis fra thair dennis. Now wes the king cumin to the fute of the crag, and all his nobilis severit, heir and thair, fra him, at thair game and solace; quhen suddenlie apperit to his sicht, the fairist hart that evir

wes sene afore with levand creature. The noyis and din of this hart rinnand, as apperit, with awful and braid tindis, maid the kingis hors so efrayit, that na renzeis nicht hald him; bot ran, perforce, our mire and mossis, away with the king. Nochtheles, the hart followit so fast, that he dang baith the king and his horse to the ground. Than the king kest abak his handis betwixt the tindis of this hart, to haif savit him fra the straik thair of; and the haly croce slaid, incontinent, in his handis. The hart fled away with gret violence, and evanist in the same place quhare now springis the Rude Well. The pepil richt affrayitly, returnit to him out of a l partis of the wod, to comfort him eftir his trubill; and fell on kneis, devoutly adoring the haly croce; for it was not cumin but some heviny providence. as weill apperis: for thair is na man can schaw of quhat mater it is of, metel or tre. Sone eftir, the king returnit to his castell; and in the night following, he was admonist, be ane vision in his sleip, to big ane abbay of channonis regular in the same place quhare he gat the croce. Als sone as he was awalkinnit, he schew his visione to Alkwine, his confessoure; and he na thing suspended his gud mind, bot erar inflammit him with maist fervent devotion thairto. The king, incontinent, send his traist servandis in France and Flanderis, and brocht richt crafty masonis to big this abbay; syne dedicat it in the honor of this haly croce. The croce remanit continually in the said abbay, to the time of King David Bruce; quhilk was unhappily tane with it at Durame, quhare it is haldin yit in gret veneration."—BOECE, *book 12, ch. 16.*

It is by no means clear what Scottish prince first built a palace, properly so called, in the precincts of this renowned seat of sanctity. The abbey, endowed by successive sovereigns and many powerful nobles with munificent gifts of lands and tithes, came, in process of time, to be one of the most important of the ecclesiastical corporations of Scotland; and as early as the days of Robert Bruce, parliaments were held occasionally within its buildings. We have evidence that James IV. had a royal lodging adjoining to the cloister; but it is generally agreed that the first considerable edifice for the accommodation of the royal family erected here was that of James V., anno 1525, great part of which still remains, and forms the north-western side of the existing palace. The more modern buildings which complete the quadrangle were erected by King Charles II. The nave of the old conventual church was used as the parish church of the Canongate from the period of the Reformation, until James II. claimed it for his chapel royal, and had it fitted up accordingly in a style of splendor which grievously outraged the feelings of his Presbyterian subjects. The roof of this fragment of a once magnificent church fell in the year 1763, and it has remained ever since in a state of desolation.—For fuller particulars, see the *Provincial Antiquities of Scotland*, or the *History of Holyrood*, by MR. CHARLES MACKIE.

The greater part of this ancient palace is now again occupied by his Majesty Charles the Tenth of France, and the rest of that illustrious family which, in former ages so closely connected by marriage and alliance with the House of Stuart, seems to have been destined to run a similar career of misfortune. *Requiescat in pace!* [Since the date of the above note, the Palace of Holyrood has on several occasions been honored by Queen Victoria, as well as by George IV. on his visit to Scotland in 1822.]

NOTE B, p. 27.—STEELE, THE COVENANTER.

The following extract from Swift's *Life of Creighton* gives the particulars of the bloody scene alluded to in the text:—

"Having drank hard one night, I (Creighton) dreamed that I had found

Captain David Steele, a notorious rebel, in one of the five farmers' houses on a mountain in the shire of Clydesdale, and parish of Lismahago, within eight miles of Hamilton, a place that I was well acquainted with. This man was head of the rebels since the affair of Aird-moss; having succeeded to Hackston, who had been there taken, and afterwards hanged, as the reader has already heard; for, as to Robert Hamilton, who was then Commander-in-Chief at Bothwell Bridge, he appeared no more among them, but fled, as it was believed, to Holland.

"Steele, and his father before him, held a farm in the estate of Hamilton, within two or three miles of that town. When he betook himself to arms, the farm lay waste, and the Duke could find no other person who would venture to take it: whereupon his Grace sent several messages to Steele to know the reason why he kept the farm waste. The Duke received no other answer than that he would keep it waste, in spite of him and the king too; whereupon his Grace, at whose table I had always the honor to be a welcome guest, desired I would use my endeavors to destroy that rogue, and I would oblige him forever.

* * * * *

"I return to my story. When I awaked out of my dream, as I had done before in the affair of Wilson (and I desire the same apology I made in the introduction to these Memoirs may serve for both) I presently rose and ordered thirty-six dragoons to be at the place appointed by break of day. When we arrived thither, I sent a party to each of the five farmers' houses. This villain Steele had murdered above forty of the king's subjects in cold blood; and, as I was informed, had often laid snares to entrap me; but it happened, that although he usually kept a gang to attend him, yet at this time he had none, when he stood in the greatest need. One of the party found him in one of the farmers' houses, just as I happened to dream. The dragoons first searched all the rooms below without success, till two of them hearing somebody stirring over their heads, went up a pair of turnpike stairs. Steele had put on his clothes while the search was making below; the chamber where he lay was called the chamber of Deese, which is the name given to a room where the laird lies when he comes to a tenant's house. Steele, suddenly opening a door, fired a blunderbuss down at the two dragoons as they were coming up the stairs; but the bullets grazing against the side of the turnpike, only wounded, and did not kill them. Then Steele violently threw himself down the stairs among them, and made toward the door to save his life, but lost it upon the spot; for the dragoons who guarded the house despatched him with their broadswords. I was not with the party when he was killed, being at that time employed in searching at one of the other houses, but I soon found what had happened, by hearing the noise of the shot made with the blunderbuss; from whence I returned straight to Lanark, and immediately sent one of the dragoons express to General Drummond at Edinburgh."—SWIFT'S *Works*, vol. xii. (*Memoirs of Captain John Creighton*), pages 57-59, Edit. Edinb. 1824.

Wodrow gives a different account of this exploit—"In December this year (1686), David Steil, in the parish of Lismahagow, was surprised in the fields by Lieutenant Creighton, and after his surrender of himself on quarters, he was in a very little time most barbarously shot, and lies buried in the churchyard there."

NOTE C, p. 50.—IRON RASP.

The ingenious Mr. R. CHAMBERS, in his *Traditions of Edinburgh*, gives the following account of the forgotten rasp or risp:—

"This house had a *pin* or *risp* at the door, instead of the more modern convenience, a knocker. The pin, rendered interesting by the figure which it makes in Scottish song, was formed of a small rod of iron, twisted or notched, which was placed perpendicularly, starting out a little from the door, and bore a small ring of the same metal, which an applicant for admittance drew rapidly up and down the *nicks*, so as to produce a grating sound. Sometimes the rod was simply stretched across the *vizzying* hole, a convenient aperture through which the porter could take cognizance of the person applying; in which case it acted also as a stanchion. These were almost all disused about sixty years ago, when knockers were generally substituted as more genteel. But knockers at that time did not long remain in repute, though they have never been altogether superseded, even by bells, in the Old Town. The comparative merit of knockers and pins was for a long time a subject of doubt, and many knockers got their heads twisted off in the course of the dispute."—*Traditions of Edinburgh*.

NOTE D, p. 59.—EARL OF WINTON.

The incident here alluded to is thus narrated in Nichols' *Progresses of James I.*, vol. iii. p. 306.

"The family" (of Winton) "owed its first elevation to the union of Sir Christopher Seton with a sister of King Robert Bruce. With King James V. they acquired great favor, who, having created his brother Earl of Dumfermline in 1599, made Robert, seventh Lord Seton, Earl of Winton in 1600. Before the King's accession to the English throne, his Majesty and the Queen were frequently at Seton, where the Earl kept a very hospitable table, at which all foreigners of quality were entertained on their visits to Scotland. His Lordship died in 1603, and was buried on the 5th of April, on the very day the King left Edinburgh for England. His Majesty, we are told, was pleased to rest himself at the south-west round of the orchard of Seton, on the Highway, till the funeral was over, that he might not withdraw the noble company; and he said that he had lost a good, faithful, and loyal subject."—NICHOLS' *Progresses of K. James.*, vol. iii. p. 306.

NOTE E, p. 60.—M'GREGOR OF GLENSTRAE.

"The 2 of Octr: (1603) Allaster MacGregor of Glenstrae tane be the laird Arkynles, bot escapit againe; bot after taken be the Earle of Argyll the 4 of Januarii, and brought to Edr: the 9 of Januar: 1604, wt: 18 mae of hes frendes MacGregors. He was convoyit to Berwick be the gaird, conform to the Earle's promes; for he promesit to put him out of Scottis grund: Sua he keipit an Hielandman's promes in respect he sent the gaird to convoy him out of Scottis grund; bot yai wer not directit to part wt: him, bot to fetche him bak againe. The 18 of Januar, he came at evin againe to Edinburghe; and upone the 20 day, he was hangit at the crosse, and ij of his friendes and name, upon ane gallows: himself being chieff, he was hangit his awin hight above the rest of his friendis."—BIRRELL'S *Diary* (in DALZELL'S *Fragments of Scottish History*), pp. 60, 61.

NOTE F, p. 96.—FIDELITY OF THE HIGHLANDERS.

Of the strong undeviating attachment of the Highlanders to the person, and their deference to the will or commands of their chiefs and superiors—their rigid adherence to duty and principle—and their chivalrous acts of self-devotion to these in the face of danger and death—there are many instances recorded in General Stewart of Garth's interesting *Sketches of the*

Highlanders and Highland Regiments, which might not inaptly supply parallels to the deeds of the Romans themselves, at the era when Rome was in her glory. The following instances of such are worthy of being here quoted:—

“In the year 1795, a serious disturbance broke out in Glasgow, among the Breadalbane Fencibles. Several men, having been confined and threatened with corporal punishment, considerable discontent and irritation were excited among their comrades, which increased to such violence, that when some men were confined in the guard-house, a great proportion of the regiment rushed out and forcibly released the prisoners. This violation of military discipline was not to be passed over, and accordingly measures were immediately taken to secure the ringleaders. But so many were equally concerned, that it was difficult, if not impossible, to fix the crime on any, as being more prominently guilty. And here was shown a trait of character worthy of a better cause, and which originated from a feeling alive to the disgrace of a degrading punishment. The soldiers being made sensible of the nature of their misconduct, and the consequent necessity of public example, *several men voluntarily offered themselves to stand trial*, and suffer the sentence of the law as an atonement for the whole. These men were accordingly marched to Edinburgh Castle, tried, and four condemned to be shot. Three of them were afterward reprieved, and the fourth, Alexander Sutherland, was shot at Musselburgh Sands.

“The following demi-official account of this unfortunate misunderstanding was published at the time :—

“During the afternoon of Monday, when a private of the light company of the Breadalbane Fencibles, who had been confined for a *military* offence was released by that company, and some other companies who had assembled in a tumultuous manner before the guard-house, no person whatever was hurt, and no violence offered; and however unjustifiable the proceedings, it originated not from any disrespect or ill-will to their officers, but from a mistaken point of honor, in a particular set of men in the battalion, who thought themselves disgraced by the impending punishment of one of their number. The men have, in every respect, since that period conducted themselves with the greatest regularity, and strict subordination. The whole of the battalion seemed extremely sensible of the improper conduct of such as were concerned, whatever regret they might feel for the fate of the few individuals who had so readily given themselves up as prisoners, to be tried for their own and others’ misconduct.”

“On the march to Edinburgh, a circumstance occurred, the more worthy of notice, as it shows a strong principle of honor and fidelity to his word and to his officer in a common Highland soldier. One of the men stated to the officer commanding the party, that he knew what his fate would be, but that he had left business of the utmost importance to a friend in Glasgow, which he wished to transact before his death; that, as to himself, he was fully prepared to meet his fate; but with regard to his friend, he could not die in peace unless the business was settled, and that, if the officer would suffer him to return to Glasgow, a few hours there would be sufficient, and he would join him before he reached Edinburgh, and march as a prisoner with the party. The soldier added, ‘You have known me since I was a child; you know my country and kindred, and you may believe I shall never bring you to any blame by a breach of the promise I now make, to be with you in full time to be delivered up in the Castle.’ This was a startling proposal to the officer, who was a judicious, humane man, and knew perfectly his risk and responsibility in yielding to such an extraordinary application. However, his confidence was such, that he complied with the request of the prisoner, who returned to Glasgow at night, settled his business, and left the town before daylight to redeem his pledge. He

took a long circuit to avoid being seen, apprehended as a deserter, and sent back to Glasgow, as probably his account of his officer's indulgence would not have been credited. In consequence of this caution, and the lengthened march through woods and over hills by an unfrequented route, there was no appearance of him at the hour appointed. The perplexity of the officer when he reached the neighborhood of Edinburgh may be easily imagined. He moved forward slowly indeed, but no soldier appeared; and unable to delay any longer, he marched up to the Castle, and as he was delivering over the prisoners, but before any report was given in, Macmartin, the absent soldier, rushed in among his fellow-prisoners, all pale with anxiety and fatigue, and breathless with apprehension of the consequences in which his delay might have involved his benefactor.

"In whatever light the conduct of the officer (my respectable friend, Major Colin Campbell) may be considered, either by military men or others in this memorable exemplification of the characteristic principle of his countrymen, fidelity to their word, it cannot but be wished that the soldier's magnanimous self-devotion had been taken as an atonement for his own misconduct and that of the whole, who also had made a high sacrifice, in the voluntary offer of their lives for the conduct of their brother soldiers. Are these a people to be treated as malefactors, without regard to their feelings and principles? and might not a discipline, somewhat different from the usual mode, be, with advantage, applied to them?"—Vol. ii., pp. 413-415, 3d Edit.

"A soldier of this regiment (The Argyleshire Highlanders), deserted, and emigrated to America, where he settled. Several years after his desertion, a letter was received from him, with a sum of money for the purpose of procuring one or two men to supply his place in the regiment, as the only recompense he could make for 'breaking his oath to his God and his allegiance to his King, which preyed on his conscience in such a manner, that he had no rest night nor day.'

"This man had had good principles early instilled into his mind, and the disgrace which he had been originally taught to believe would attach to a breach of faith now operated with full effect. The soldier who deserted from the 42d Regiment at Gibraltar, in 1797, exhibited the same remorse of conscience after he had violated his allegiance. In countries where such principles prevail, and regulate the character of a people, the mass of the population may, on occasions of trial, be reckoned on as sound and trustworthy."—Vol. ii., p. 218, 3d Edit.

The late James Menzies of Culdares, having engaged in the rebellion of 1715, and been taken at Preston, in Lancashire, was carried to London, where he was tried and condemned, but afterward reprieved. Grateful for this clemency, he remained at home in 1745, but, retaining a predilection for the old cause, he sent a handsome charger as a present to Prince Charles, when advancing through England. The servant who led and delivered the horse was taken prisoner, and carried to Carlisle, where he was tried and condemned. To extort a discovery of the person who sent the horse, threats of immediate execution in case of refusal, and offers of pardon on his giving information, were held out ineffectually to the faithful messenger. He knew, he said, what the consequence of a disclosure would be to his master, and his own life was nothing in the comparison; when brought out for execution he was again pressed to inform on his master. He asked if they were serious in supposing him such a villain. If he did what they desired, and forgot his master and his trust, he could not return to his native country, for Glenlyon would be no home or country for him, as he would be despised and hunted out of the Glen. Accordingly, he kept steady to his trust, and was executed. This trusty servant's name was

John MacNaughton, from Glenlyon, in Perthshire; he deserves to be mentioned, both on account of his incorruptible fidelity, and of his testimony to the honorable principles of the people, and to their detestation of a breach of trust to a kind and honorable master, however great might be the risk, or however fatal the consequences to the individual himself"—Vol. i., pp. 52, 53, 3d Edit.

APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION.

It has been suggested to the Author that it might be well to reprint here a detailed account of the Public Dinner alluded to in the foregoing Introduction, as given in the newspapers of the time; and the reader is accordingly presented with the following extract from the **EDINBURGH WEEKLY JOURNAL** for Wednesday, 28th February 1827.

THEATRICAL FUND DINNER.

BEFORE proceeding with our account of this very interesting festival—for so it may be termed—it is our duty to present to our readers the following letter, which we have received from the President:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EDINBURGH WEEKLY JOURNAL.

SIR—I am extremely sorry I have not leisure to correct the copy you sent me of what I am stated to have said at the dinner for the Theatrical Fund. I am no orator; and upon such occasions as are alluded to, I say as well as I can what the time requires.

However, I hope your reporter has been more accurate in other instances than in mine. I have corrected one passage, in which I am made to speak with great impropriety and petulance respecting the opinions of those who did not approve of dramatic entertainments. I have restored what I said, which was meant to be respectful, as every objection founded in conscience is, in my opinion, entitled to be so treated. Other errors I left as I found them, it being of little consequence whether I spoke sense or nonsense in what was merely intended for the purpose of the hour.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

Edinburgh, Monday.

THE Theatrical Fund Dinner, which took place on Friday (February 23, 1827.) in the Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh, was conducted with admirable spirit. The Chairman, SIR WALTER SCOTT, among his other great qualifications, is well fitted to enliven such an entertainment. His manners are extremely easy, and his style of speaking simple and natural, yet full of vivacity and point; and he has the art, if it be art, of relaxing into a certain homeliness of manner, without losing one particle of his dignity. He thus takes off some of that solemn formality which belongs to such meetings, and, by his easy and graceful familiarity, imparts to them somewhat of the

pleasing character of a private entertainment. Near Sir W. Scott sat the Earl of Fife, Lord Meadowbank, Sir John Hope of Pinkie, Bart., Admiral Adam, Baron Clerk Rattray, Gilbert Innes, Esq., James Walker, Esq., Robert Dundas, Esq., Alexander Smith, Esq., etc.

The cloth being removed, "Non Nobis Domine" was sung by Messrs. Thorne, Swift, Collier, and Hartley, after which the following toasts were given from the chair:—

"The King"—all the honors.

"The Duke of Clarence and the Royal Family."

THE CHAIRMAN, in proposing the next toast, which he wished to be drunk in solemn silence, said, it was to the memory of a regretted prince, whom we had lately lost. Every individual would at once conjecture to whom he alluded. He had no intention to dwell on his military merits. They had been told in the senate; they had been repeated in the cottage; and whenever a soldier was the theme, his name was never far distant. But it was chiefly in connection with the business of this meeting, which his late Royal Highness had condescended in a particular manner to patronize, that they were called on to drink to his memory. To that charity he had often sacrificed his time, and had given up the little leisure which he had from important business. He was always ready to attend on every occasion of this kind; and it was in that view that he proposed to drink to the memory of his late Royal Highness the Duke of York.—Drunk in solemn silence.

THE CHAIRMAN then requested that gentlemen would fill a bumper as full as it would hold, while he would say only a few words. He was in the habit of hearing speeches, and he knew the feeling with which long ones were regarded. He was sure that it was perfectly unnecessary for him to enter into any vindication of the dramatic art, which they had come here to support. This, however, he considered to be the proper time and proper occasion for him to say a few words on that love of representation which was an innate feeling in human nature. It was the first amusement that the child had—it grew greater as he grew up; and, even in the decline of life, nothing amused so much as when a common tale is told with appropriate personification. The first thing a child does is to ape his schoolmaster, by flogging a chair. The assuming a character ourselves, or the seeing others assume an imaginary character, is an enjoyment natural to humanity. It was implanted in our very nature, to take pleasure from such representations, at proper times and on proper occasions. In all ages the theatrical art had kept pace with the improvement of mankind, and with the progress of letters and the fine arts. As man has advanced from the ruder stages of society, the love of dramatic representations has increased, and all works of this nature have been improved in character and in structure. They had only to turn their eyes to the history of ancient Greece, although he did not pretend to be very deeply versed in its ancient drama. Its first tragic poet commanded a body of troops at the battle of Marathon. Sophocles and Euripides were men of rank in Athens when Athens was in its highest renown. They shook Athens with their discourses, as their theatrical works shook the theatre itself. If they turned to France in the time of Louis the Fourteenth, that era which is the classical history of that country, they would find that it was referred to by all Frenchmen as the golden age of the drama there. And also in England, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, the drama was at its highest pitch, when the nation began to mingle deeply and wisely in the general politics of Europe, not only not receiving laws from others, but giving laws to the world, and vindicating the rights of mankind. (Cheers.) There have been various times when the dramatic art subsequently fell into disrepute. Its professors have been stigmatized; and laws have been passed against them, less dishonorable

to them than to the statesman by whom they were proposed, and to the legislators by whom they were adopted. What were the times in which these laws were passed? Was it not when virtue was seldom inculcated as a moral duty, that we were required to relinquish the most rational of all our amusements, when the clergy were enjoined celibacy, and when the laity were denied the right to read their Bibles? He thought that it must have been from a notion of penance that they erected the drama into an ideal place of profaneness, and spoke of the theatre as of the tents of sin. He did not mean to dispute that there were many excellent persons who thought differently from him, and he disclaimed the slightest idea of charging them with bigotry or hypocrisy on that account. He gave them full credit for their tender consciences, in making these objections, although they did not appear relevant to him. But to these persons, being, as he believed them, men of worth and piety, he was sure the purpose of this meeting would furnish some apology for an error, if there be any, in the opinions of those who attend. They would approve the gift, although they might differ in other points. Such might not approve of going to the theatre, but at least could not deny that they might give away from their superfluity, what was required for the relief of the sick, the support of the aged, and the comfort of the afflicted. These were duties enjoined by our religion itself. (Loud cheers.)

The performers are in a particular manner entitled to the support or regard, when in old age or distress, of those who had partaken of the amusement of these places which they render an ornament to society. Their art was of a peculiarly delicate and precarious nature. They had to serve a long apprenticeship. It was very long before even the first-rate geniuses could acquire the mechanical knowledge of the stage business. They must languish long in obscurity before they can avail themselves of their natural talents; and after that, they have but a short space of time, during which they are fortunate if they can provide the means of comfort in the decline of life. That comes late, and lasts but a short time; after which they are left dependent. Their limbs fail—their teeth are loosened—their voice is lost—and they are left, after giving happiness to others, in a most disconsolate state. The public were liberal and generous to those deserving their protection. It was a sad thing to be dependent on the favor, or, he might say, in plain terms, on the caprice, of the public; and this more particularly for a class of persons, of whom extreme prudence is not the character. There might be instances of opportunities being neglected; but let each gentleman tax himself and consider the opportunities *they* had neglected, and the sums of money *they* had wasted; let every gentleman look into his own bosom and say whether these were circumstances which would soften his own feelings, were he to be plunged into distress. He put it to every generous bosom—to every better feeling—to say what consolation was it to old age to be told that you might have made provision at a time which had been neglected—(loud cheers)—and to find it objected, that if you had pleased you might have been wealthy. He had hitherto been speaking of what, in theatrical language, was called *stars*, but they were sometimes falling ones. There was another class of sufferers naturally and necessarily connected with the theatre, without whom it was impossible to go on. The sailors have a saying, every man cannot be a boatswain. If there must be a great actor to act Hamlet, there must also be people to act Laertes, the King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern, otherwise a drama cannot go on. If even Garrick himself were to rise from the dead, he could not act Hamlet alone. There must be generals, colonels, commanding-officers, subalterns. But what are the private soldiers to do? Many have mistaken their own talents, and have been driven in early youth to try the

stage, to which they are not competent. He would know what to say to the indifferent poet and to the bad artist. He would say that it was foolish; and he would recommend to the poet to become a scribe, and the artist to paint sign-posts—(loud laughter).—But you could not send the player adrift, for if he cannot play Hamlet, he must play Guildenstern. Where there are many laborers, wages must be low, and no man in such a situation can decently support a wife and family, and save something out of his income for old age. What is this man to do in latter life? Are you to cast him off like an old hinge, or a piece of useless machinery, which has done its work? To a person who has contributed to our amusement, this would be unkind, ungrateful, and unchristian. His wants are not of his own making, but arise from the natural sources of sickness and old age. It cannot be denied that there is one class of sufferers to whom no imprudence can be ascribed, except on first entering on the profession. After putting his hand to the dramatic plough, he cannot draw back; but must continue at it, and toil, till death release him from want; or charity, by its milder influence, steps in to render that want more tolerable. He had little more to say, except that he sincerely hoped that the collection to-day, from the number of respectable gentlemen present, would meet the views entertained by the patrons. He hoped it would do so. They should not be disheartened. Though they could not do a great deal, they might do something. They had this consolation, that everything they parted with from their superfluity would do some good. They would sleep the better themselves when they have been the means of giving sleep to others. It was ungrateful and unkind, that those who had sacrificed their youth to our amusement should not receive the reward due to them, but should be reduced to hard fare in their old age. We cannot think of poor Falstaff going to bed without his cup of sack, or Macbeth fed on bones as marrowless as those of Banquo. (Loud cheers and laughter.) As he believed that they were all as fond of the dramatic art as he was in his younger days, he would propose that they should drink “The Theatrical Fund,” with three times three.

MR. MACKAY rose, on behalf of his brethren, to return their thanks for the toast just drunk. Many of the gentlemen present, he said, were perhaps not fully acquainted with the nature and intention of the institution, and it might not be amiss to enter into some explanation on the subject. With whomsoever the idea of a Theatrical Fund might have originated (and it had been disputed by the surviving relatives of two or three individuals), certain it was, that the first legally constituted Theatrical Fund owed its origin to one of the brightest ornaments to the profession, the late David Garrick. That eminent actor conceived that, by a weekly subscription in the Theatre, a fund might be raised among its members, from which a portion might be given to those of his less fortunate brethren, and thus an opportunity would be offered for prudence to provide what fortune had denied—a comfortable provision for the winter of life. With the welfare of his profession constantly at heart, the zeal with which he labored to uphold its respectability, and to impress upon the minds of his brethren, not only the necessity, but the blessing of independence, the Fund became his peculiar care. He drew up a form of laws for its government, procured, at his own expense, the passing of an Act of Parliament for its confirmation, bequeathed to it a handsome legacy, and thus became the Father of the Drury-Lane Fund. So constant was his attachment to this infant establishment, that he chose to grace the close of the brightest theatrical life on record, by the last display of his transcendent talent, on the occasion of a benefit to this child of his adoption, which ever since has gone by the name of the Garrick Fund. In imitation of his noble example, Funds had

been established in several provincial theatres in England; but it remained for Mrs. Henry Siddons and Mr. William Murray to become the founders of the first Theatrical Fund in Scotland. (Cheers.) This Fund commenced under the most favorable auspices; it was liberally supported by the management, and highly patronized by the public. Notwithstanding, it fell short in the accomplishment of its intentions. What those intentions were, he (Mr. Mackay) need not recapitulate, but they failed; and he did not hesitate to confess that a want of energy on the part of the performers was the probable cause. A new set of Rules and Regulations were lately drawn up, submitted to and approved of at a general meeting of the members of the Theatre; and accordingly the Fund was remodeled on the first of January last. And here he thought he did but echo the feelings of his brethren, by publicly acknowledging the obligations they were under to the management for the aid given, and the warm interest they had all along taken in the welfare of the Fund. (Cheers.) The nature and object of the profession had been so well treated of by the President, that he would say nothing; but of the numerous offspring of science and genius that court precarious fame, the Actor boasts the slenderest claim of all; the sport of fortune, the creatures of fashion, and the victims of caprice—they are seen, heard, and admired, but to be forgot—they leave no trace, no memorial of their existence—they “come like shadows, so depart.” (Cheers.) Yet humble though their pretensions be, there was no profession, trade, or calling, where such a combination of requisites, mental and bodily, were indispensable. In all others the principal may practice after he has been visited by the afflicting hand of Providence—some by the loss of limb—some of voice—and many, when the faculty of the mind is on the wane, may be assisted by dutiful children, or devoted servants. Not so the Actor—he must retain all he ever did possess, or sink dejected to a mournful home. (Applause.) Yet while they are toiling for ephemeral theatric fame how very few ever possess the means of hoarding in their youth that which would give bread in old age! But now a brighter prospect dawned upon them, and to the success of this their infant establishment they looked with hope, as to a comfortable and peaceful home in their declining years. He concluded by tendering to the meeting in the name of his brethren and sisters, their unfeigned thanks for their liberal support, and begged to propose “the health of the Patrons of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund.” (Cheers.)

LORD MEADOWBANK said, that by desire of his Hon. Friend in the chair and of his Noble Friend at his right hand, he begged leave to return thanks for the honor which had been conferred on the Patrons of this excellent Institution. He could answer for himself—he could answer for them all—that they were deeply impressed with the meritorious objects which it has in view, and of their anxious wish to promote its interests. For himself, he might be permitted to say, that he was rather surprised at finding his own name, as one of the Patrons, associated with so many individuals of high rank and powerful influence. But it was an excuse for those who had placed him in a situation so honorable and so distinguished, that when this charity was instituted he happened to hold a high and responsible station under the Crown, when he might have been of use in assisting and promoting its objects. His Lordship much feared that he could have little expectation, situated as he now was, of doing either; but he could confidently assert, that few things would give him greater gratification than being able to contribute to its prosperity and support; and, indeed, when one recollects the pleasure which at all periods of life he has received from the exhibitions of the stage, and the exertions of the meritorious individuals for whose aid this Fund has been established, he must be divested both

of gratitude and feeling who would not give his best endeavors to promote its welfare. And now, that he might in some measure repay the gratification, which has been afforded himself, he would beg leave to propose a toast, the health of one of the Patrons—a great and distinguished individual, whose name must always stand by itself, and which, in an assembly such as this, or in any other assembly of Scotsmen, can never be received, not, he would say, with ordinary feelings of pleasure or of delight, but with those of rapture or enthusiasm. In doing so he felt that he stood in a somewhat new situation. Whoever had been called upon to propose the health of his Hon. Friend to whom he alluded, some time ago, would have found himself enabled, from the mystery in which certain matters were involved, to gratify himself and his auditors by allusions which found a responding chord in their own feelings, and to deal in the language, the sincere language of panegyric, without intruding on the modesty of the great individual to whom he referred. But it was no longer possible, consistently with the respect to one's auditors, to use upon this subject terms either of mystification, or of obscure or indirect allusion. The clouds have been dispelled—the *darkness visible* has been cleared away—and the Great Unknown—the minstrel of our native land—the mighty magician who has rolled back the current of time, and conjured up before our living senses the men and manners of days which have long passed away, stands revealed to the hearts and the eyes of his affectionate and admiring countrymen. If he himself were capable of imagining all that belonged to this mighty subject—were he even able to give utterance to all that, as a friend, as a man, and as a Scotsman, he must feel regarding it; yet, knowing, as he well did, that this illustrious individual was not more distinguished for his towering talents than for those feelings which rendered such allusions ungrateful to himself, however sparingly introduced, he would, on that account, still refrain from doing that which would otherwise be no less pleasing to him than to his audience. But this, his Lordship hoped he would be allowed to say (his auditors would not pardon him were he to say less) we owe him, as a people, a large and heavy debt of gratitude. He it is who has opened to foreigners the grand and characteristic beauties of our country. It is to him that we owe that our gallant ancestors, and the struggles of our illustrious patriots—who fought and bled in order to obtain and secure that independence and that liberty we now enjoy—have obtained a fame no longer confined to the boundaries of a remote and comparatively obscure nation, and who has called down upon their struggles for glory and freedom the admiration of foreign countries. He it is who has conferred a new reputation on our national character, and bestowed on Scotland an imperishable name, were it only by her having given birth to himself. (Loud and rapturous applause.)

SIR WALTER SCOTT certainly did not think that, in coming here to-day, he would have the task of acknowledging, before three hundred gentlemen, a secret which, considering that it was communicated to more than twenty people, had been remarkably well kept. He was now before the bar of his country, and might be understood to be on trial before Lord Meadowbank as an offender; yet he was sure that every impartial jury would bring in a verdict of Not Proven. He did not now think it necessary to enter into the reasons of his long silence. Perhaps caprice might have a considerable share in it. He had now to say, however, that the merits of these works if they had any, and their faults, were entirely imputable to himself. (Long and loud cheering.) He was afraid to think on what he had done—"look on't again I dare not." He had thus far unbosomed himself, and he knew that it would be reported to the public. He meant, then, seriously to state, that when he said he was the author, he was the total and undivided author.

With the exception of quotations, there was not a single word that was not derived from himself, or suggested in the course of his reading. The wand was now broken, and the book buried. You will allow me further to say, with Prospero, it is your breath that has filled my sails, and to crave one single toast in the capacity of the author of these novels; and he would dedicate a bumper to the health of one who has represented some of those characters, of which he had endeavored to give the skeleton, with a degree of liveliness which rendered him grateful. He would propose the health of his friend Bailie Nicol Jarvie (loud applause)—and he was sure that, when the Author of *Waverley* and Rob Roy drinks to Nicol Jarvie, it would be received with that degree of applause to which that gentleman has always been accustomed, and that they would take care that on the present occasion it should be PRODIGIOUS! (Long and vehement applause.)

MR. MACKAY, who here spoke with great humor in the character of Bailie Jarvie.—My conscience! my worthy father the deacon could not have believed that his son could have had sic a compliment paid to him by the Great Unknown!

SIR WALTER SCOTT.—The Small Known now, Mr. Bailie.

MR. MACKAY.—He had been long identified with the Bailie, and he was vain of the cognomen which he had now worn for eight years; and he questioned if any of his brethren in the Council had given such universal satisfaction. (Loud laughter and applause.) Before he sat down, he begged to propose “The Lord Provost, and the City of Edinburgh.”

SIR WALTER SCOTT apologized for the absence of the Lord Provost, who had gone to London on public business.

Tune—“Within a mile of Edinburgh town.”

SIR WALTER SCOTT gave “The Duke of Wellington and the Army.

Glee—“How merrily we live.”

“Lord Melville and the Navy, that fought till they left nobody to fight with, like an arch sportsman who clears all and goes after the game.”

MR. PAT. ROBERTSON.—They had heard this evening a toast, which had been received with intense delight, which will be published in every newspaper, and will be hailed with joy by all Europe. He had one toast assigned him, which he had great pleasure in giving. He was sure that the stage had in all ages a great effect on the morals and manners of the people. It was very desirable that the stage should be well regulated; and there was no criterion by which its regulation could be better determined than by the moral character and personal respectability of the performers. He was not one of those stern moralists who objected to the Theatre. The most fastidious moralist could not possibly apprehend any injury from the stage of Edinburgh, as it was presently managed, and so long as it was adorned by that illustrious individual Mrs. Henry Siddons, whose public exhibitions were not more remarkable for feminine grace and delicacy, than was her private character for every virtue which could be admired in domestic life. He would conclude with reciting a few words from Shakespeare, in a spirit not of contradiction, to those stern moralists who disliked the Theatre, but of meekness—“Good, my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? do you hear, let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time.” He then gave “Mrs. Henry Siddons, and success to the Theatre Royal of Edinburgh.”

MR. MURRAY.—Gentlemen, I rise to return thanks for the honor you have done Mrs. Siddons, in doing which I am somewhat diffculted, from the extreme delicacy which attends a brother's expatiating upon a sister's claims of honors publicly paid—(hear, hear)—yet, gentlemen, your kindness emboldens me to say, that were I to give utterance to all a brother's feelings, I should not exaggerate these claims. (Loud applause.) I there-

fore, Gentlemen, thank you most cordially for the honor you have done her, and shall now request permission to make an observation on the establishment of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund, Mr. Mackay has done Mrs. Henry Siddons and myself the honor to ascribe the establishment to us; but no, Gentlemen, it owes its origin to a higher source—the publication of the novel of Rob Roy—the unprecedented success of the opera adapted from that popular production. (Hear, hear.) It was that success which relieved the Edinburgh Theatre from its difficulties, and enabled Mrs. Siddons to carry into effect the establishment of a fund she had long desired, but was prevented from effecting, from the unsettled state of her theatrical concerns. I therefore hope that in future years, when the aged and infirm actor derives relief from this Fund, he will, in the language of the gallant Highlander “Cast his eye to good old Scotland, and not forget Rob Roy.” (Loud applause.)

SIR WALTER SCOTT here stated, that Mrs. Siddons wanted the means but not the will of beginning the Theatrical Fund. He here alluded to the great merits of Mr. Murray's management, and to his merits as an actor, which was of the first order, and of which every person who attends the Theatre must be sensible; and after alluding to the embarrassment with which the Theatre had been at one period threatened, he concluded by giving the health of Mr. Murray, which was drunk with three times three.

MR. MURRAY.—Gentlemen, I wish I could believe, that, in any degree I merited the compliments with which it has pleased Sir Walter Scott to preface the proposal of my health, or the very flattering manner in which you have done me the honor to receive it. The approbation of such an assembly is most gratifying to me, and might encourage feelings of vanity, were not such feelings crushed by my conviction, that no man holding the situation I have so long held in Edinburgh, could have failed, placed in the peculiar circumstances in which I have been placed. Gentlemen, I shall not insult your good taste by eulogiums upon your judgment or kindly feeling; though to the first I owe any improvement I may have made as an actor, and certainly my success as a Manager to the second. (Applause.) When, upon the death of my dear brother, the late Mr. Siddons, it was proposed that I should undertake the management of the Edinburgh Theatre, I confess I drew back, doubting my capability to free it from the load of debt and difficulty with which it was surrounded. In this state of anxiety, I solicited the advice of one who had ever honored me with his kindest regard, and whose name no member of my profession can pronounce without feelings of the deepest respect and gratitude—I allude to the late Mr. John Kemble. (Great applause.) To him I applied; and with the repetition of his advice I shall cease to trespass upon your time—(hear, hear),—“My dear William, fear not; integrity and assiduity must prove an overmatch for all difficulty; and though I approve not your indulging a vain confidence in your own ability, and viewing with respectful apprehension the judgment of the audience you have to act before, yet be assured the judgment will ever be tempered by the feeling that you are acting for the widow and the fatherless.” (Loud applause.) Gentlemen, those words have never passed from my mind; and I feel convinced that you have pardoned my many errors, from the feeling that I was striving for the widow and the fatherless. (Long and enthusiastic applause followed Mr. Murray's address.)

SIR WALTER SCOTT gave the health of the Stewards.

MR. VANDERHOFF.—Mr. President and Gentlemen, the honor conferred upon the Stewards, in the very flattering compliment you have just paid us, calls forth our warmest acknowledgments. In tendering you our thanks

for the approbation you have been pleased to express of our humble exertions, I would beg leave to advert to the cause in which we have been engaged. Yet, surrounded as I am by the genius—the eloquence of this enlightened city, I cannot but feel the presumption which ventures to address you on so interesting a subject. Accustomed to speak in the language of others, I feel quite at a loss for terms wherein to clothe the sentiments excited by the present occasion. (Applause.) The nature of the Institution which has sought your fostering patronage, and the objects which it contemplates, have been fully explained to you. But, gentlemen, the relief which it proposes is not a gratuitous relief—but to be purchased by the individual contribution of its members toward the general good. This Fund lends no encouragement to idleness or improvidence; but it offers an opportunity to prudence, in vigor and youth, to make provision against the evening of life and its attendant infirmity. A period is fixed at which we admit the plea of age as an exemption from professional labor. It is painful to behold the veteran on the stage (compelled by necessity) contending against physical decay, mocking the joyousness of mirth with the feebleness of age, when the energies decline, when the memory fails, and “the big manly voice, turning again toward childish treble, pipes and whistles in the sound.” We would remove him from the mimic scene, where fiction constitutes the charm; we would not view old age caricaturing itself. (Applause.) But as our means may be found, in time of need, inadequate to the fulfilment of our wishes—fearful of raising expectations which we may be unable to gratify—desirous not “to keep the word of promise to the ear, and break it to the hope”—we have presumed to court the assistance of the friends of the drama to strengthen our infant institution. Our appeal has been successful beyond our most sanguine expectations. The distinguished patronage conferred on us by your presence on this occasion, and the substantial support which your benevolence has so liberally afforded to our institution, must impress every member of the Fund with the most grateful sentiments—sentiments which no language can express, no time obliterate. (Applause.) I will not trespass longer on your attention. I would the task of acknowledging our obligation had fallen into abler hands. (Hear, hear.) In the name of the Stewards, I most respectfully and cordially thank you for the honor you have done us, which greatly overpays our poor endeavors. (Applause.)

[This speech, though rather inadequately reported, was one of the best delivered on this occasion. That it was creditable to Mr. Vandenhoff's taste and feelings the preceding sketch will show; but how much it was so, it does *not* show.]

MR. J. CAY gave “Professor Wilson and the University of Edinburgh, of which he was one of the brightest ornaments.”

LORD MEADOWBANK, after a suitable eulogium, gave “the Earl of Fife,” which was drunk with three times three.

THE EARL OF FIFE expressed his high gratification at the honor conferred on him. He intimated his approbation of the institution, and his readiness to promote its success by every means in his power. He concluded with giving “the health of the Company of Edinburgh.”

MR. JONES, on rising to return thanks, being received with considerable applause, said, he was truly grateful for the kind encouragement he had experienced, but the novelty of the situation in which he now was, renewed all the feelings he experienced when he first saw himself announced in the bills as a young gentleman, being his first appearance on any stage. (Laughter and applause.) Although in the presence of those whose indulgence had, in another sphere, so often shielded him from the penalties of inability, he was unable to execute the task which had so unexpectedly devolved

upon him in behalf of his brethren and himself. He therefore begged the company to imagine all that grateful hearts could prompt the most eloquent to utter, and that would be a copy of their feelings. (Applause.) He begged to trespass another moment on their attention, for the purpose of expressing the thanks of the members of the Fund to the Gentlemen of the Edinburgh Professional Society of Musicians, who, finding that this meeting was appointed to take place on the same evening with their concert, had in the handsomest manner agreed to postpone it. Although it was his duty thus to preface the toast he had to propose, he was certain the meeting required no further inducement than the recollection of the pleasure the exertions of those gentlemen had often afforded them within those walls, to join heartily in drinking "Health and prosperity to the Edinburgh Professional Society of Musicians." (Applause.)

MR. PAT. ROBERTSON proposed "the health of Mr. Jeffrey," whose absence was owing to indisposition. The public was well aware that he was the most distinguished advocate at the bar; he was like distinguished for the kindness, frankness, and cordial manner in which he communicated with the junior members of the profession to the esteem of whom his splendid talents would always entitle him.

MR. J. MACONCHIE gave "the health of Mrs. Siddons, senior—the most distinguished ornament of the stage."

SIR W. SCOTT said, that if anything could reconcile him to old age, it was the reflection that he had seen the rising as well as the setting sun Mrs. Siddons. He remembered well their breakfasting near to the Theatre—waiting the whole day—the crushing at the doors at six o'clock—and their going in and counting their fingers till seven o'clock. But the very first step—the very first word which she uttered, was sufficient to overpay him for all his labors. The house was literally electrified; and it was only from witnessing the effects of her genius, that he could guess to what a pitch theatrical excellence could be carried. Those young gentlemen who have only seen the setting sun of this distinguished performer, beautiful and serene as that was, must give us old fellows, who have seen its rise and its meridian, leave to hold our heads a little higher.

MR. DUNDAS gave "The memory of Home, the author of Douglas."

MR. MACKAY here announced that the subscription for the night amounted to £280; and he expressed gratitude for the substantial proof of their kindness. [We are happy to state that subscriptions have since flowed in very liberally.]

MR. MACKAY here entertained the company with a pathetic song.

SIR WALTER SCOTT apologized for having so long forgotten their native land. He would now give "Scotland, the Land of Cakes." He would give every river, every loch, every hill, from Tweed to Johnnie Groat's House—every lass in her cottage and countess in her castle; and may her sons stand by her, as their fathers did before them, and he who would not drink a bumper to his toast, may he never drink whisky more!

SIR WALTER SCOTT here gave Lord Meadowbank, who returned thanks.

MR. H. GLASSFORD BELL said that he should not have ventured to intrude himself upon the attention of the assembly, did not feel confident that the toast he begged to have the honor to propose would make amends for the very imperfect manner in which he might express his sentiments regarding it. It had been said, that notwithstanding the mental supremacy of the present age, notwithstanding that the page of our history was studded with names destined also for the page of immortality, that the genius of Shakespeare was extinct, and the fountain of his inspiration dried up. It might be that these observations were unfortunately correct, or it might be that we were bewildered with a name, not disappointed of the reality—for

though Shakespeare had brought a Hamlet, an Othello, and a Macbeth, an Ariel, a Juliet, and a Rosalind, upon the stage, were there not authors living who had brought as varied, as exquisitely painted, and as undying a range of characters into our hearts? The shape of the mere mould into which genius poured its golden treasures was surely a matter of little moment—let it be called a Tragedy, a Comedy, or a Waverley Novel. But even among the dramatic authors of the present day, he was unwilling to allow that there was a great and palpable decline from the glory of preceding ages, and his toast alone would bear him out in denying the truth of the proposition. After eulogizing the names of Baillie, Byron, Coleridge, Maturin, and others he begged to have the honor of proposing “the health of James Sheridan Knowles.”

SIR WALTER SCOTT.—Gentlemen, I crave a bumper all over. The last toast reminds me of a neglect of duty. Unaccustomed to a public duty of this kind, errors in conducting the ceremonial of it may be excused, and omissions pardoned. Perhaps I have made one or two omissions in the course of the evening, for which I trust you will grant me your pardon and indulgence. One thing in particular I have omitted, and I would now wish to make amends for it, by a libation of reverence and respect to the memory of SHAKESPEARE. He was a man of universal genius, and from a period soon after his own era to the present day, he has been universally idolized. When I come to his honored name, I am like the sick man who hung up his crutches at the shrine, and was obliged to confess that he did not walk better than before. It is indeed difficult, gentlemen, to compare him to any other individual. The only one to whom I can at all compare him, is the wonderful Arabian dervise, who dived into the body of each, and in this way became familiar with the thoughts and secrets of their hearts. He was a man of obscure origin, and, as a player, limited in his acquirements, but he was born evidently with a universal genius. His eyes glanced at all the varied aspects of life, and his fancy portrayed with equal talents the king on the throne, and the clown who crackles his chestnuts at a Christmas fire. Whatever note he takes, he strikes it just and true, and awakens a corresponding chord in our own bosoms. Gentlemen, I propose “the memory of William Shakespeare.”

Glee—“Lightly tread, ’tis hallowed ground.”

After the glee, SIR WALTER rose, and begged to propose as a toast the health of a lady, whose living merit is not a little honorable to Scotland. The toast (he said) is also flattering to the national vanity of a Scotchman, as the lady whom I intend to propose is a native of this country. From the public her works have met with the most favorable reception. One piece of hers, in particular, was often acted here of late years, and gave pleasure of no mean kind to many brilliant and fashionable audiences. In her private character she (he begged leave to say) is as remarkable, as in a public sense she is for her genius. In short, he would in one word name—“Joanna Baillie.”

This health being drunk, Mr. Thorne was called on for a song, and sung, with great taste and feeling, “The Anchor’s weighed.”

W. MENZIES, Esq., Advocate, rose to propose the health of a gentleman for many years connected at intervals with the dramatic art in Scotland. Whether we look at the range of characters he performs, or at the capacity which he evinces in executing those which he undertakes, he is equally to be admired. In all his parts he is unrivaled. The individual to whom he alluded is (said he) well known to the gentlemen present, in the characters of Malvolio, Lord Ogleby, and the Green Man; and, in addition to his other qualities, he merits, for his perfection in these characters, the grateful sense of this meeting. He would wish, in the first place, to drink his

health as an actor ; but he was not less estimable in domestic life, and as a private gentleman; and when he announced him as one whom the Chairman had honored with his friendship, he was sure that all present would cordially join him in drinking "The health of Mr. Terry."

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN, banker, said, that he did not rise with the intention of making a speech. He merely wished to contribute in a few words to the mirth of the evening—an evening which certainly had not passed off without some blunders. It had been understood—at least he had learnt or supposed, from the expressions of Mr. Pritchard—that it would be sufficient to put a paper, with the name of the contributor, into the box, and that the gentleman thus contributing would be called on for the money next morning. He, for his part, had committed a blunder, but it may serve as a caution to those who may be present at the dinner of next year. He had merely put in his name, written on a slip of paper, without the money. But he would recommend that, as some of the gentlemen might be in the same situation, the box should again be sent round, and he was confident that they, as well as he, would redeem their error.

SIR WALTER SCOTT said, that the meeting was somewhat in the situation of Mrs. Anne Page, who had £300 and possibilities. We have already got, said he, £280, but I should like, I confess, to have the £300. He would gratify himself by proposing the health of an honorable person, the Lord Chief-Baron, whom England has sent to us, and connecting with it that of his "yoke-fellow on the bench," as Shakespeare says, Mr. Baron Clerk—The Court of Exchequer.

MR. BARON CLERK regretted the absence of his learned brother. None, he was sure, could be more generous in his nature, or more ready to help a Scottish purpose.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.—There is one who ought to be remembered on this occasion. He is, indeed, well entitled to our grateful recollection—one, in short, to whom the drama in this city owes much. He succeeded, not without trouble, and perhaps at some considerable sacrifice, in establishing a theatre. The younger part of the company may not recollect the theatre to which I allude ; but there are some with me who may remember by name a place called Carrubber's Close. There Allan Ramsay established his little theatre. His own pastoral was not fit for the stage, but it has its admirers in those who love the Doric language in which it is written ; and it is not without merit of a very peculiar kind. But, laying aside all considerations of his literary merit, Allan was a good jovial honest fellow, who could crack a bottle with the best.—"The memory of Allan Ramsay."

MR. MURRAY, on being requested, sung, "'Twas merry in the hall," and at the conclusion was greeted with repeated rounds of applause.

MR. JONES.—One omission I conceive has been made. The cause of the Fund has been ably advocated, but it is still susceptible, in my opinion of an additional charm—

Without the smile, from partial beauty won,
Oh, what were man?—a world without a sun!

And there would not be a darker spot in poetry than would be the corner in Shakespeare Square, if, like its fellow, the Register Office, the Theatre were deserted by the ladies. They are, in fact, our most attractive stars.—"The Patronesses of the Theatre—the Ladies of the city of Edinburgh." The toast I ask leave to drink with all the honors which conviviality can confer.

MR. PATRICK ROBERTSON would be the last man willingly to introduce any topic calculated to interrupt the harmony of the evening; yet he felt

himself treading upon ticklish ground when he approached the region of the Nor' Loch. He assured the company, however, that he was not about to enter on the subject of the Improvement Bill. They all knew, that if the public were unanimous—if the consent of all parties were obtained—if the rights and interests of everybody were therein attended to, saved, reserved, respected and excepted—if everybody agreed to it—and finally, a most essential point, if nobody opposed it—then, and in that case, and provided also that due intimation were given—the bill in question might pass—would pass—or might, could, would, or should pass—all expenses being defrayed.—(Laughter.)—He was the advocate of neither champion, and would neither avail himself of the absence of the Right Hon. the Lord Provost, nor take advantage of the non-appearance of his friend, Mr. Cockburn.—(Laughter.)—But in the midst of these civic broils, there had been elicited a ray of hope, that at some future period, in Beresford Park, or some other place, if all parties were consulted and satisfied, and if intimation were duly made at the Kirk doors of all parishes in Scotland, in terms of the statute in that behalf provided—the people of Edinburgh might by possibility get a new theatre.—(Cheers and laughter.)—But wherever the belligerent powers might be pleased to set down this new theatre, he was sure they all hoped to meet the Old Company in it.—He should therefore propose—"Better accommodation to the Old Company in the New Theatre, site unknown."—Mr. Robertson's speech was most humorously given, and he sat down amidst loud cheers and laughter.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.—Wherever the new theatre is built, I hope it will not be large. There are two errors which we commonly commit—the one arising from our pride, the other from our poverty. If there are twelve plans, it is odds but the largest, without any regard to comfort, or an eye to the probable expense, is adopted. There was the College projected on this scale, and undertaken in the same manner, and who shall see the end of it? It has been building all my life, and may probably last during the lives of my children and my children's children. Let not the same prophetic hymn be sung, when we commence a new theatre, which was performed on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of a certain edifice, "Behold the endless work begun." Play-going folk should attend somewhat to convenience. The new theatre should, in the first place, be such as may be finished in eighteen months or two years; and, in the second place, it should be one in which we can hear our old friends with comfort. It is better that a moderate-sized house should be crowded now and then, than to have a large theatre with benches continually empty, to the discouragement of the actors, and the discomfort of the spectators.—(Applause.) He then commented in flattering terms on the genius of Mackenzie and his private worth, and concluded by proposing "The health of Henry Mackenzie, Esq."

Immediately afterward he said: Gentlemen,—It is now wearing late, and I shall request permission to retire. Like Partridge I may say, "*non sum qualis eram.*" At my time of day, I can agree with Lord Ogilby as to his rheumatism, and say, "There's a twinge." I hope, therefore, you will excuse me for leaving the chair.—(The worthy Baronet then retired amidst loud, long, and rapturous cheering.)

MR. PATRICK ROBERTSON was then called to the chair by common acclamation.

Gentlemen, said MR. ROBERTSON, I take the liberty of asking you to fill a bumper to the very brim. There is not one of us who will not remember while he lives being present at this day's festival, and the declaration made this night by the gentleman who has just left the chair. That declaration has rent the veil from the features of the Great Unknown—

a name which must now merge in the name of the Great Known It will be henceforth coupled with the name of SCOTT, which will become familiar like a household word. We have heard this confession from his own immortal lips—(cheering)—and we cannot dwell with too much, or too fervent praise, on the merits of the greatest man whom Scotland has produced.

After which, several other toasts were given, and Mr. Robertson left the room about half-past eleven. A few choice spirits, however, rallied round Captain Broadhead, of the 7th Hussars, who was called to the chair, and the festivity was prolonged till an early hour on Saturday morning.

The band of the Theatre occupied the gallery, and that of the 7th Hussars the end of the room, opposite the chair, whose performances were greatly admired. It is but justice to Mr. Gibb to state, that the dinner was very handsome (though slowly served in) and the wines good. The attention of the stewards was exemplary. Mr. Murray and Mr. Vandenhoff with great good taste, attended on Sir Walter Scott's right and left, and we know that he has expressed himself much gratified by their anxious politeness and sedulity.

NOTE TO THE TWO DROVERS.

NOTE, p. 150.—ROBERT DONN'S POEMS.

I cannot dismiss this story without resting attention for a moment on the light which has been thrown on the character of the Highland Drover since the time of its first appearance, by the account of a drover poet, by name Robert Mackay, or, as he was commonly called, Rob Donn, *i. e.* brown Robert, and certain specimens of his talents, published in the 90th Number of the Quarterly Review. The picture which that paper gives of the habits and feelings of a class of persons with which the general reader would be apt to associate no ideas but those of wild superstition and rude manners, is in the highest degree interesting; and I cannot resist the temptation of quoting two of the songs of this hitherto unheard-of poet of humble life. They are thus introduced by the reviewer :—

“Upon one occasion, it seems, Rob’s attendance upon his master’s cattle business detained him a whole year from home, and at his return he found that a fair maiden, to whom his troth had been plighted of yore, had lost sight of her vows, and was on the eve of being married to a rival (a carpenter by trade), who had profited by the young drover’s absence. The following song was composed during a sleepless night, in the neighborhood of Crieff, in Perthshire, and the home sickness which it expresses appears to be almost as much that of the deer-hunter as of the loving swain :—

*‘ Easy is my bed, it is easy,
But it is not to sleep that I incline ;
The wind whistles northwards, northwards,
And my thoughts move with it.
More pleasant were it to be with thee
In the little glen of calves,
Than to be counting of droves
In the enclosures of Crieff.
Easy is my bed, etc.*

*‘ Great is my esteem of the maiden,
Towards whose dwelling the north wind blows ;
She is ever cheerful, sportive, kindly,
Without folly, without vanity, without pride.
True is her heart—were I under hiding,
And fifty men in pursuit of my footsteps,
I should find protection, when they surrounded me most closely,
In the secret recess of that shieling.
Easy is my bed, etc.*

' Oh for the day for turning my face homeward,
 That I may see the maiden of beauty:—
 Joyful will it be to me to be with thee,
 Fair girl with the long heavy locks!—
 Choice of all places for deer hunting
 Are the brindled rock and the ridge!
 How sweet at evening to be dragging the slain deer
 Downward along the piper's cairn!

Easy is my bed, etc.

' Great is my esteem for the maiden
 Who parted from me by the west side of the enclosed field,
 Late yet again will she linger in that fold,
 Long after the kine are assembled.
 It is I myself who have taken no dislike to thee,
 Though far away from thee am I now.
 It is for the thought of thee that sleep flies from me;
 Great is the profit to me of thy parting kiss!

Easy is my bed, etc.

' Dear to me are the boundaries of the forest;
 Far from Crieff is my heart;
 My remembrance is of the hillocks of sheep,
 And the heath of many knolls.
 Oh for the red streaked fissures of the rock,
 Where in spring time the fawns leap;
 Oh for the crags towards which the wind is blowing—
 Cheap would be my bed to be there!

Easy is my bed, etc.

"The following describes Rob's feelings on the first discovery of his damsel's infidelity. The airs of both these pieces are his own, and, the Highland ladies say, very beautiful.

Heavy to me is the shieling, and the hum that is in it,
 Since the ear that was wont to listen is now no more on the watch.
 Where is Isabel, the courteous, the conversable, a sister in kindness?
 Where is Anne, the slender-browed, the turret-breasted, whose glossy hair
 pleased me when yet a boy?

*Heich! what an hour was my returning,
 Pain such as that sunset brought, what availeth me to tell it?*

I traversed the fold, and upward among the trees—
 Each place, far and near, wherein I was wont to salute my love.
 When I looked down from the crag, and beheld the fair-haired stranger
 dallying with his bride,
 I wished that I had never revisited the glen of my dreams.
*Such things came into my heart as that sun was going down,
 A pain of which I shall never be rid, what availeth me to tell it?*

Since it hath been heard that the carpenter hath persuaded thee,
 My sleep is disturbed—busy is foolishness within me at midnight.
 The kindness that has been between us,—I cannot shake off that memory
 in visions;
 Thou callest me not to thy side; but love is to me for a messenger.
*There is strife within me, and I toss to be at liberty;
 And ever the closer it clings, and the delusion is growing to me as a tree.*

' Anne, yellow-haired daughter of Donald, surely thou knowest not how it
is with me—
That it is old love, unrepaid, which has worn down from me my strength;
That when far from thee, beyond many mountains, the wound in my heart
was throbbing,
Stirring and searching forever, as when I sat beside thee on the turf.
Now, then, hear me this once, if forever I am to be without thee,
My spirit is broken—give me one kiss ere I leave this land!

' Haughtily and scornfully the maiden looked upon me;
Never will it be work for thy fingers to unloose the band from my curls;
Thou hast been absent a twelvemonth, and six were seeking me dili-
gently;
Was thy superiority so high, that there should be no end of abiding for
thee?
Ha! ha! ha!—hast thou at last become sick?
Is it love that is to give death to thee I surely the enemy has been in no haste.

' But how shall I hate thee, even though toward me thou hast become
cold?
When my discourse is most angry concerning thy name in thine absence.
Of a sudden thine image, with its old dearness comes visibly into my
mind;
And a secret voice whispers that love will yet prevail!
And I become surety for it anew, darling,
And it springs up at that hour lofty as a tower.'

"Rude and bald as these things appear in a verbal translation, and
rough as they might possibly appear, even were the originals intelligible, we
confess we are disposed to think they would of themselves justify Dr.
Mackay (their Editor) in placing this herdsman-lover among the true sons
of song."—*Quarterly Review* No. XC., July 1831.

GLOSSARY TO THE CHRONICLES.

- AD GRÆCAS KALENDAS, at the Greek Calends (an indefinite period).
 AUGHT, possession, property.
 AVE REGINA CÆLI, hail, Mother of Heaven!
 AWMOUS, alms.
 BAULD, bold.
 BIEN, frugal.
 BIGGING, building.
 BON GRE, MAL GRE, good grace, bad grace.
 CARRITCH, catechism.
 CHAPPIT, struck.
 CHERE EXQUISE, exquisite cheer.
 CONJURO VOS OMNES, SPIRITUS MALIGNI, MAGNI ET PARVI, I conjure you, spirits of evil, great and small.
 CRACKS, gossip.
 CRAW, an intoxicating drink.
 DEUS VOBISCUM, God be with you.
 DEVOIR, duty, service.
 DO VENIAM, I give pardon or leave.
 ELEVE, scholar or cadet.
 ES SPUKT, it is a spirit.
 EX CAPIT E LECTI, from the head of the bed.
 EX CATHEDRA, from the chair.
 FABLIAUX, fables.
 FASH, trouble.
 FAUTEUIL, arm-chair.
 FIANCAILLES, espousals.
 FORBEARS, ancestors.
 GREW, greyhound.
 HÆC NOS NOVIMUS ESSE NIHIL, this we understood to be nothing.
 HINC ILLÆ LACHRYMÆ, hence these tears.
 IPSA CORPORA, the very pieces.
 JONGLERIE, jugglery.
 KAIN, a tax payable to the landlord in kind.
 LAI, lay, ditty.
 MEMBRORUM DAMNO OMNI MAJOR, DIMENTIA, QUÆ NEC NOMINA SERVORUM, NEC VULTUM, AGNOSCIT AMICORUM, with the loss of all his members, and worse, the loss of mind, which prevents him recognizing either the names of his servants or the faces of his friends.
 MEZZO TERMINI, half limits.
 MORBUS SONTICUS, a noisome disease.
 NOMINIS UMBRA, under the shade of a name.
 NON AUDET, NISI QUÆ DEDICIT, DARE QUOD MEDICORUM EST; PROMITTUNT MEDICI, TRACTANT FABRILIA FABRI, no one dares to prescribe medicine who has not studied that science; physicians promise what comes within their skill, and artificers mind only their own craft.
 OWER, over.
 PERSONA STANDI IN JUDICIO, personal power to prosecute.
 PORTE-COCHERE, carriage-entrance.
 QUI JURAT PROXIMO ET NON DECIPIT, 'who hath not sworn deceitfully.'
 RATTEN, a rat.
 REIVING, roving.
 REVECHE, tart.
 ROW, roll.
 RUS IN URBE, the country in the town.
 SANG FROID, coolly.
 SATIS EST MI FILI, enough, my son.
 SCHELM, rascal.
 SKIRL, screech.
 SOCIETAS MATER DISCORDIAM, partnership, the mother of discord.
 SPORRAN, a purse.
 SUB VEXILLO REGIS APUD PRÆLIUM JUXTA BRANXTON, under the royal standard in the battle near Branxton.
 TOD, a fox.
 TREMOR CORDIS, a quaking of the heart.
 VIS UNITA FORTIOR, united strength is stronger.
 VIX EA NOSTRA VOCO, I declare this hardly our own.
 VOLENTI NON FIT INJURIA, to the willing there is no injury done.
 WEAN, an infant.
 WHEEN, a few.

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